

## **Request for Proposals: Rapid Research on Covid-related Impacts and Emerging Solutions for Students in High School and Beyond**

The Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE), with generous support from the [Walton Family Foundation](#), seeks to fund rapid research to understand the impact of Covid-19 on students both during and after their time in high school. We aim to support innovative and effective policies and interventions to improve access to educational opportunities and success in high school and beyond. Through this RFP, our goal is to support rapid grants of up to \$50,000. Grants may continue for a total duration of up to 12 months. Grants may use existing data or may include original data collection.

We are open to the full range of research methods. It is essential that research methods are appropriate to the research question and that the chosen methods are conducted to meet proper standards of rigor and quality.

**Proposals must be submitted to the [RFP portal](#) by April 7, 2023 at 5 p.m. PDT.**

### **Topics of Interest**

We are interested in a range of topics related to **supporting students during high school and beyond**. Some examples include:

- Successful strategies for supporting high school students' academic and social-emotional well-being.
- How are post-high school institutions (e.g., community colleges, four-year universities, or workforce-related programs) addressing Covid-19 recovery? How are workforces or higher education institutions addressing the negative effects of the pandemic on high school students and their families, and to what effect?
- Outcomes for older students affected by the pandemic, such as the impact of Covid-19 on high school graduation, postsecondary enrollment and retention, and post-secondary success.
- How high schools are adapting credit recovery, college and career counseling, and other support systems to help students affected by schooling disruptions with graduation and transition into higher education or the workforce.
- Changes in demand for careers, including those that do not require a high school degree, and implications for higher education.
- Documentation of disruptions and associated impacts for secondary and postsecondary students from special populations, e.g., transition supports for students with disabilities, language acquisition for English language learners, and social services for students experiencing homelessness.
- Emerging evidence on innovative higher education solutions for students who experienced Covid-related educational disruptions.
- How demographic shifts are changing student preferences and impacting both the number and makeup of college applicants.

## **Cross-cutting Areas of Priority**

We will prioritize research that focuses on one or more of three priority areas:

- Historically underserved student groups/communities
- Innovative models, solutions, and outcomes
- Amplification of parent and/or student voices

## **Application Process**

Full proposals are due **April 7, 2023, at 5 p.m. PDT**. Proposals are limited to 5 pages (single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman), plus appendices (described below). The full proposal plus appendices should be combined into one PDF document and uploaded through the RFP portal. The narrative should include the following:

- 1. Description of the research questions and how they will address problems in policy or practice:** Research proposals should describe how the proposed study will address pressing needs in policy and/or practice. Where appropriate, proposals should also build upon relevant disciplinary literatures.
- 2. A comprehensive research plan:** The proposal should discuss in detail the methods that will be used to answer the research questions posed, along with the types of data to be collected. Proposals should clearly describe the measures, instruments, and procedures to be used in the data collection process and the technical adequacy of the measures, if available. The research plan should also include specific plans for how the collected data will be analyzed to answer the research questions. The proposal should describe the participant sample (including characteristics of both individuals and also schools/districts as applicable), along with the rationale for sample selection, and the investigator's access to the sample. Proposers should clearly define the study participants, and address whether the design is premised on the needs and interests of participants.
- 3. A focus on equity and inclusion:** Research proposals should describe how the research will prioritize the needs of historically marginalized students, leverage equitable research practices, and/or be responsive to the needs and wishes of schools and communities involved in the research. To support researchers, CRPE has developed a [toolkit](#) for approaching research with an equity lens. This resource contains modules with recommendations and best practices for various stages of the research process.
- 4. A plan for sharing the research and results:** Proposals should include a strategy for dissemination and transparency of the research, and for reaching a broad audience with the findings of the project. We expect all funded projects to abide by the following expectations regarding communication and dissemination.

- Grantees are expected to produce at least one public-facing deliverable (e.g., commentaries, blogs, briefs). If the project team does not feel they have expertise in this area, the CRPE communications team can assist.
  - Each team will be expected to participate in at least one virtual convening of funded projects and potential funders in 2024 or 2025.
  - Each team will be expected to participate in informal monthly updates with CRPE and complete a short final report describing their project's outcomes.
  - All publications and presentations based on the project will acknowledge CRPE and the Walton Family Foundation.
- 5. A justification for project level and duration:** All proposals should provide a strong rationale for the duration and level of funding requested, with more detailed elaboration in the budget narrative.

**The following appendices are also required:**

- **Appendix A:** An abstract of no more than 200 words on one single-spaced page that describes the research question(s) and research plan.
- **Appendix B:** Biographies and qualifications of named members of the research team (no more than 1 page per named team member, no more than 5 pages total).
- **Appendix C:** References in APA or any other standard format, no page limit.
- **Appendix D:** Figures and tables that cannot fit in the narrative, no more than 5 pages total. We recommend including a timeline in Appendix D.
- **Appendix E:** Budget and budget narrative.

**Review Process and Criteria**

Full proposals will consider the *intellectual merit* of the proposed research as its potential to advance knowledge, including a statement of research questions and a brief description of methods. The *broader impact* of the proposed research is its potential to benefit society and contribute to the achievement of specific, desired societal outcomes. Reviews will be conducted internally by CRPE staff and contractors. Given the short timeline, we envision that feedback on submitted proposals will be minimal.

We anticipate funding decisions will be made by **April 23, 2023** to enable grant start dates as early as **June 1, 2023**.

**Estimated Funding**

We anticipate funding further waves of grants that focus on K-12 and other topics. For this rapid response program, we anticipate funding 10 or more projects, but final funding decisions will depend on the quality and quantity of applications received.

**Questions**

For substantive questions about the grants program or about potential research projects, contact Morgan Polikoff at [polikoff@usc.edu](mailto:polikoff@usc.edu). For technical questions about budgets, contracts, or logistics, contact Natalie Mayfield at [nmayfie1@asu.edu](mailto:nmayfie1@asu.edu).

## **Eligibility and Restrictions**

### **Eligibility**

- Proposals must be for academic research projects that aim to study education. Proposals for activities other than research are not eligible (e.g., program evaluations, professional development, curriculum development, scholarships, capital projects, etc.). Additionally, proposals for research studies focused on areas other than education are not eligible.
- Principal Investigators (PIs) and Co-PIs applying may include individuals with an earned doctorate in an academic discipline or professional field, or appropriate experience in an education research-related profession. Graduate student PIs who have already advanced to the candidacy stage may also be eligible to apply.
- The PI must be affiliated with an administering organization. Grants may not be awarded directly to individuals. Examples of eligible organizations include non-profit or public colleges, universities, school districts, and research facilities, as well as other non-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) determination from the IRS. Proposals are only accepted from the U.S. All proposals must be submitted in English and budgets must be proposed in U.S. Dollars.

### **Restrictions**

- Budget totals should be less than \$50,000. These amounts are inclusive of up to 15% indirect cost charges, pursuant to the Walton Family Foundation's indirect cost [policy](#). We strongly encourage applicants to carefully consider their budget and its appropriateness for the scope of work proposed.
- Projects proposed may not be longer than one year in duration.
- PIs and Co-PIs may hold no more than one active research grant from these funds. (This restriction does not apply to the administering organization; organizations may submit as many proposals as they like as long as they are for different projects and have different research teams.)
- PIs and Co-PIs may not submit more than one research proposal at a time.