Center for Retirement Research at Boston College – Steven H. Sandell Grant Program for Retirement and Disability Research

From:	Office of Corporate and Foundation Relations
Coordinator:	Nicole Dancz-Bal, Director, Corporate and Foundation Relations (nicole.dancz@emory.edu)
Website:	https://crr.bc.edu/about-us/grant-programs/steven-h-sandell-grant-program-2/
Submission Limitations:	None
Foundation Deadline:	Submissions must be received through the online system **by 5:00pm (EST) on Monday, January 31, 2022**

*Please contact your RAS unit ****and**** Nicole Dancz-Bal to inform them of your intent to submit.*

Background and Purpose:

The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College was established in 1998 through a grant from the Social Security Administration. The Center's mission is to produce first-class research and forge a strong link between the academic community and decision makers in the public and private sectors around an issue of critical importance to the nation's future. To achieve this mission, the Center conducts a wide variety of research projects, transmits new findings to a broad audience, trains new scholars, and broadens access to valuable data sources. Since its inception, the Center has established a reputation as an authoritative source of information on all major aspects of the retirement income and policy debate.

The Center for Retirement Research at Boston College (CRR) is soliciting proposals for the Steven H. Sandell Grant Program for retirement or disability policy research. The program is funded by a grant from the U.S. Social Security Administration (SSA) through the Retirement and Disability Research Consortium (RDRC). The program's purpose is to promote research by junior or non-tenured scholars. Historically underserved or underrepresented individuals are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must demonstrate that their proposal focuses on at least one of the following major themes: (1) trends in disability; (2) work in the modern economy; (3) disabled beneficiaries and return-to-work; (4) informing long-term projections and models; (5) improving communication and outreach; (6) economic security of SSA beneficiaries; (7) disparities by race and ethnicity; and (8) improving service delivery.

Junior or non-tenured scholars within seven years of receiving their Ph.D. are encouraged to submit a proposal. The Center welcomes applications from all academic disciplines.

The program will award up to three grants of $45,000. Successful applicants are required to complete the research project outlined in their proposal within a year of the award. Eligibility requirements are limited to those stated below; no affiliation with the CRR is necessary to apply.

Proposal Requirements

Qualifications of the Principal Investigator:

- The Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI), if applicable, are required to have a Ph.D. or comparable professional certification.
- Grants are not intended to fund dissertation research.
- The PI and the Co-PI(s) must be junior or non-tenured scholar(s) who are within 1-7 years of completing their Ph.D. or comparable professional certification.
- Please note that applications with senior or tenured co-authors may be disqualified.
- The scholar(s) must be employed fulltime at an academic or research institution.

- The applicant must be affiliated with an institution (with accreditation equivalent to U.S. standards) willing to enter into a sub-agreement with Boston College.
- International scholars are eligible to apply, but proposals must have some relevance to U.S. policy

Research Focal Areas: *Grant proposals must focus on at least one of the following research focal areas*

- Trends in disability;
- Work in the modern economy;
- Disabled beneficiaries and return-to-work;
- Informing long-term projections and models;
- Improving communication and outreach;
- Economic security of SSA beneficiaries;
- Disparities by race and ethnicity; or
- Improving service delivery.

Format of Grant Proposal:

- Proposals should not exceed 12 pages.
- Twelve-point, Times New Roman font, 1.5 line spacing, and 1-inch margins are required.
- Required elements of the proposal include:
    - Cover page with the project title, researcher(s) name and institution(s) [1 page].
    - Abstract describing the project purpose, data, and methods [1 page].
    - Description of research question, methodology, data, statement of complementarity or overlap with existing or on-going research, and timeline [9 pages].
    - References [1 page].

Grant Budget

Budget Request

- Applicants are required to submit the "Sandell Grant Budget Matrix" as part of the proposal (not included in the proposal page limit) which can be downloaded from the Center's website.
- The project budget must provide a detailed inventory of funding requested from the CRR.
- Applicants must provide detail about any other sources of support: funding agency, amount of award, level of effort, and period of award.
- The budget may not exceed $45,000 and must itemize the costs for:

    1. Personnel: salary and benefits for PI and, if applicable, Co-PI and research assistants. Describe whether this amount is a course buy-out or summer salary.

    2. Materials and Supplies: e.g. research materials and computers. Researchers seeking to purchase a computer must provide a detailed justification for its specific use on the project. A computer cannot be taken outside of U.S. jurisdiction and will be considered federal property until the end of 2022.

    3. Other: e.g. postage, printing.

    4. Indirect Costs: capped at 10% for institutions. Any item costing over $5,000 is considered equipment. Equipment is not allowed under the Sandell Grant Program. All original documents for expenses incurred must be submitted.

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Grants/Research Administration Office Approval

- All budgets and grant proposals must be reviewed and formally approved by an authorized representative at the researcher(s)' institutional grants/research administration office.
- A complete and signed scanned copy of the budget matrix must be submitted with the online application, and must include the signatures of the PI, Co- PI (when applicable), **and of an authorized representative from the researcher(s)' institutional grants/research administration office.**

Cap on Indirect Costs

- The indirect cost rate for the Sandell Grant Program is capped at 10%.

Subcontracts Mechanism for Sandell Grant Recipients

- All grants awarded will be paid through an institutional subcontract with the primary researcher(s)' institution, per compliance with federal reporting requirements.
- Awards are not made to individuals under any circumstance.

Submission Process

- All applicants must complete the online submission form found on the Center's website.
- Required components of the online application include:

    1. Contact information, educational information, and institutional affiliation.

    2. Research proposal (Word or PDF attachment).

    3. Current CV of the PI and Co-PI.

    4. Budget matrix from the Center's website with signatures.

    5. Name and contact information for two references.
- Submissions must be received through the online system by **5:00pm (EST) on Monday, January 31, 2022**.

Letters of Recommendation

- Grant applicants have the option to submit up to two letters of recommendation for their proposal.
- Letters should discuss the qualifications of the applicant to conduct the research outlined in the proposal and advocate for the proposed project.
- **Letters are also subject to the above deadline,** and must be submitted through the online system by the person writing the letter at the Center's website.

Review Process

- Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of representatives from the RDRC and SSA.
- The following criteria will be used to evaluate proposals:

    1. Relevance to retirement or disability policy as listed in the Research Focal Areas section.

    2. Research design and methodology, with priority given to researchers using complex data sets which include the *Health and Retirement Study* and the *Survey of Income and Program Participation*.

3. Qualifications of the applicant and research setting.

4. Cost effectiveness.

5. Work plan design and schedule of deliverables.

Notification of Award

- Grant recipients will be notified in April 2022.
- Final projects must be completed within one year of the award.
- Grant recipients are also required to provide quarterly report updates to the program administrator.
- Select grant winners may be required to present their results to the SSA or during the annual RDRC meeting in Washington, DC or Baltimore.