NSF
Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants for the Social Sciences

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Research Development Office
Institute for Policy & Social Research
What is IPSR?

• Research center for social sciences & policy
• Home to eight research centers
  » Center for Science, Tech. & Econ. Policy
  » Center for the Study of Injustice
  » Center for Environmental Policy
  » Center for Indigenous Research, Sci. & Tech.
  » Surveillance Studies Research Center
  » Center for Military, War, and Society Studies
  » Center for Migration Research
  » Surveillance Studies Research Center
• Pre-award, post-award, data services, graduate research initiatives
Purpose

• for doctoral students

• to improve quality of dissertation research

• not meant to cover tuition or your time
Disciplines

- Archeology
- Bio/Cultural Anthropology
- Decision, Risk & Mgmt. Sciences
- Economics
- Endangered Lang.
- Geography
- Law & Social Sciences
- Linguistics
- Methods, Measurement & Stats
- Political Science
- Science, Tech and Society
- Science of Science/Innovation Policy
- Sociology
- Others
Eligibility

- enrolled in a U.S. academic institution
- initiating or conducting dissertation research
- do not have to be a U.S. citizen
Timing

• deadlines vary, annual or bi-annual
• begin work on proposal six months ahead
• decision takes six months from submission
• award length varies, usually up to 2 years
What does it cover?

• budget limits vary by program ($10K - $20K)
• covers your research expenses
  » field research, data collection
  » payment to subjects
  » equipment
  » travel to archives, research locations
  » living expenses while away conducting research
  » supplies
  » money spent prior to award date is not reimbursable
• award is made to the institution, not you
How does it work?

• your advisor serves as PI, but gets no payment

• all work is to be completed by you

• if awarded, IPSR will help you spend the funds (make purchases, arrange travel, etc.)

• IPSR and KU Research will handle financial reporting

• any substantive progress reports required must be completed by you
What’s required?

- Project Summary (one page, addressing merit)
- Project Description (length varies, but 10-15 pages, references are separate)
- Bios and Current Support for you and your PI
- Budget and Justification
- Facilities statement
- Data Management Plan
- Collaborators and Other Affiliations
- Letter from Dept. Chair (sometimes)
- Statement from PI (sometimes)
What makes you competitive?

• Intellectual Merit
  » the potential to advance and potentially transform the frontiers of knowledge, your field

• Broader Impacts
  » what is the potential societal benefit, and how does it contribute to desired, societal outcomes
For both criteria, these questions apply:

• Is the research creative, original, and potentially transformative?
• Is the plan sufficiently well-reasoned, well-organized, based on sound rationale? Is there a mechanism to assess success?
• Is the individual, team, and organization qualified to complete the plan?
• Does the individual have access to sufficient resources to carry out the plan?
Example of funded project:

- PhD student in Public Administration
- studying application of law to immigrants by local officials/agencies, through mixed methods (surveys and interviews)
- received funding to conduct interviews and visit archives
- funded through Law and Social Sciences section
- pilot study had been completed
- had a plan for (and experience doing) data analysis
How to get started:

• read solicitation or announcement for your specific program

• read NSF’s grant proposal guidelines

• discuss with your advisor, get approval to apply

• contact IPSR (ncmyers@ku.edu) (or alternative research center, or KU Research)
THANK YOU!