



Center for Social Development

GEORGE WARREN BROWN SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Request for Proposals

The Livable Lives Initiative

Summary. The Livable Lives Initiative at the Brown School invites proposals from eligible Washington University-affiliated faculty. Proposals should be no more than 5 pages in length. We plan to award up to 6 grants, each worth \$5,000. The application deadline is September 30, 2009.

About the Livable Lives Initiative. The Livable Lives Initiative was begun at the Brown School, but with a vision of developing it into a University-wide undertaking. The underlying goal of this RFP is to invite members of the University community to further the conceptualization and development of this initiative, thereby building a widespread partnership across our campuses. The Brown School's Center for Social Development is providing administrative and material support to launch this initiative with resources made possible by the Ford Foundation.

The purpose of this RFP is to provide stipends for projects that move forward the thinking, research, advocacy, and policymaking directed toward achieving livable lives. As articulated in the Livable Lives concept note:

We suggest that public policy be directed toward achieving "livable lives," that is, lives with a reasonable degree of social, health, and economic security. The phrase livable lives extends beyond the basic consumption orientation of traditional social welfare policy, focusing attention on the positive conditions that should be achieved for social and economic development. Thus, livable lives encompasses more than a "living wage" or "family wage," embracing a full range of social conditions and policy supports that can make life with a low or moderate income stable, secure, satisfying, and successful in raising children.

The Livable Lives Initiative concept note can be found [here](#). We encourage prospective applicants to familiarize themselves with this concept note prior to submission of materials, though we are also seeking papers that expand the theoretical and conceptual constructs of "livable lives" as described in this concept note.

Campus Box 1196 One Brookings Drive St. Louis, MO 63130-9906 • (314) 935.7433 • csd.wustl.edu



Washington University in St. Louis

Research Domains and Scope of Work. The Livable Lives Initiative is inherently inter- and multi-disciplinary. As a cross-campus initiative, we invite faculty from all Schools to apply. Applicants may conceptualize livable lives from a variety of disciplinary and conceptual frameworks drawn from (but not limited to) public health, political science, law and justice, economics, sociology, anthropology, American culture studies, history, education, psychology, medicine, art and design, and management. Applicants may propose work within a variety of areas of focus, including (but not limited to) income and economic security, nutrition, housing, employment, physical and mental health, child development and education, political and civic engagement, and environmental studies and social ecology. Applicants may use a variety of approaches to address topics of inquiry. While we anticipate that the majority of applicants will seek funding for academic products such as manuscripts, we are also open to proposals that seek to produce other kinds of products, such as oral histories or documentaries, better suited to understand their topics of inquiry.

The initiative also emphasizes the challenges of livable lives within a life course context. Understanding the long-term consequences of adversity and well-being, and the longitudinal relationships between policy supports and social change, are of particular interest.

The initiative will also emphasize applied research in its future development. Understanding how research findings can translate into policy action or into social change, how innovations can be developed and tested within communities, and how such activities can tangibly affect the lives of individuals are of particular interest.

While we recognize that the grants being offered in the current request for proposals may allow insufficient time or resources to undertake such studies, we are especially interested in proposals that have the potential to evolve into larger studies that can operationalize and facilitate livable lives.

Eligibility. Primary applicants (principal investigators) must be affiliated with Washington University as tenured, tenure-track, or research faculty. House staff, visiting faculty members, and graduate students who wish to apply as principal investigators must list a faculty sponsor. The sponsor should play an active role in the proposed project and supervise the applicant's work. The applicant must work with the sponsor in preparing the application. The research team may consist of individuals unaffiliated with the University.

Application Materials and Submission Procedure. Completed applications should consist of two parts. First, a title page, which does not count toward the page limit, should precede the application. This page should list the title of the proposed study; the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the principal investigator, and of the faculty sponsor, if applicable; and a summary of the project (no more than 150 words).

Second, the research plan should follow the title page. The text of this plan must be no longer than five (5) double-spaced pages. The research plan should describe what the applicant proposes to examine in the project, and the approach that s/he proposes to take. References should be included but will not be counted towards the five-page limit. Appendices are allowed, and may contain tables and figures, but should be kept to a minimum. Appendices will not be counted towards the five-page limit.

We request electronic submission of the title page and research plan, preferably as a single document, either as a Microsoft Word or as an Adobe portable document format (pdf) file. Please send these files to Carrie Freeman at cfreeman@wustl.edu. If you are using Microsoft Outlook to submit your application, please request a delivery receipt. If you are unable to submit your application electronically, please mail a hard copy to: Carrie Freeman, Brown School, Center for Social Development, Campus Box 1196, One Brookings Drive, St. Louis, MO 63130 .

The Livable Lives Initiative will be hosting an informal, campus-wide meeting on September 10, 2009 at 11:30 am. Please RSVP to Carrie Freeman at cfreeman@wustl.edu by August 24 if you plan to attend. The purpose of this meeting is to identify partners among the university community interested in the initiative, and collectively discuss its conceptualization and operationalization. We invite all potential applicants to come to this meeting, which will offer an opportunity to gather information and discuss their proposals with members of the initiative.

Application Deadline. The deadline for receipt of completed applications is September 30, 2009.

Post-Submission Procedures. Review of applications will begin on October 5, 2009. We anticipate informing applicants of the status of their applications no later than November 2, 2009. All grant monies will be distributed through the principal investigator in two tranches—half as an advance, and the other half when the work product is completed.

Further Information. For assistance with your submission, please contact Carrie Freeman at cfreeman@wustl.edu. Inquiries about the initiative should be directed to any member of the Livable Lives coordinating group – Renee Cunningham-Williams (williamsr@wustl.edu), Debra Haire-Joshu (djoshu@wustl.edu), Tim McBride (tmcbride@wustl.edu), Ramesh Raghavan (raghavan@wustl.edu), Mark Rank (markr@wustl.edu), or Michael Sherraden (sherrad@wustl.edu).