

# DISTINGUISHED

SEVENTH ANNUAL WILLIAM T. GRANT FOUNDATION **DISTINGUISHED FELLOWS** COMPETITION

# FELLOWS

---

## APPLICATION GUIDE

Application Deadline  
January 5, 2011

Announcement of Awards  
October 2011



WILLIAM T. GRANT FOUNDATION

Supporting research to improve the lives of young people



William T. Grant  
Distinguished Fellows Program

## OVERVIEW

The William T. Grant Foundation announces its annual competition for the William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows Program. The program, designed for influential mid-career professionals, aims to help researchers strengthen the ways in which their work reflects an understanding of policy and practice, and to allow policymakers and practitioners to enhance their capacities to recognize and use high-quality research. The deadline for Letters of Inquiry is January 5, 2011.

The goal of the Distinguished Fellows Program is to increase the supply of, demand for, and use of high-quality research in the service of improved youth outcomes. High-quality research is defined as research that simultaneously advances theory and either policy or practice. The William T. Grant Foundation believes that the lives of youth will improve if high-quality research shapes the policies and practices that affect them. In order for this to occur, we believe that researchers must understand the questions and problems that concern policymakers and practitioners, as well as the daily activities and incentive systems of people working in those roles. Similarly, we believe that high-quality research will not be produced and used to any significant degree unless policymakers and practitioners understand what constitutes high-quality research and demand it. For this to occur, policymakers and practitioners need to understand how such research is designed and produced. In part, this will come through direct experience in a research setting known for producing high-quality research on questions important to the policymaker's or practitioner's work.

The Foundation has a long history of supporting activities meant to better link policy, practice, and research. We take great pride in this history, and we believe the current relationship between practice, policy, and research can and must be improved. Preliminary work by the Forum for Youth Investment and our experiences from the first few years of this program affirmed several things.

- People who are already functioning as influential “bridgers” agreed on the importance of first-hand experiences in fields and settings outside their own.
- Potential candidates strongly urged flexibility in the design of the Fellows program. This was particularly true for policymakers and practitioners, who often had difficulty finding time for a full-time fellowship.
- Some modest level of prior exposure to complementary fields is useful in designing an enriching Fellowship experience. Prior experience with research could be a result of formal training or on-the-job experience as a funder of or client for research/evaluation work. The idea is that the Fellowship will broaden and deepen the applicant’s existing expertise.

## Key Features

**Focus on Research.** The Foundation understands that the general public, funders, and members of the media regularly use research in an attempt to influence policy and practice. However, policymakers and practitioners are more likely to use research in ways that directly affect youth, and there are other fellowship programs (e.g., the Casey Journalism program) designed to help members of the media learn about research. For these reasons, and because the Foundation’s strength is our focus on research, we are restricting our support to researchers seeking to work in policy or practice settings, or policymakers and practitioners seeking to work in research settings.



**Focus on Influentials.** Anyone could benefit from learning about other roles, but we believe we can get the most out of this program by focusing on influentials (see definition on page 7). By doing so, we expect radiating effects from the Fellowship, as these Fellows apply their newly acquired insights to produce and use high-quality research, and influence others working in their sphere.

**Focus on Mid-Career.** By extending this opportunity to mid-career individuals (see definition on page 7), we are focusing on people who are well-established in a role and unlikely to leave it. For example, after researchers complete a Fellowship at a policy site, we do not expect them subsequently to leave their research activities and pursue a career in policy. Rather, we expect that they will bring their new perspective to their ongoing research and mentoring.

## Awards

Award recipients will be named William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows. We select between two and four Distinguished Fellows annually. Each will receive up to \$175,000 for the total duration of the Fellowship, which may range from six months to two years, depending on the proposed design. The time structure of the Fellowship is deliberately flexible. Fellowships are permitted to extend up to two years provided that the Fellowship activity amounts to a **minimum** of half of a year spent at the Fellowship site(s) over the duration of the project. (Thus, the minimum duration is six months of full-time work at the Fellowship site.) We will make the grant awards to the applicant's employer, which must be a governmental or private nonprofit organization.

If appropriate and necessary, the Foundation will also provide small grants up to \$25,000 to the Fellowship site(s) to defray the costs associated with hosting a Distinguished Fellow.

Notification of awards will be made in October 2011. Fellowships are expected to start on November 1, 2011.

## Additional Capacity-Building Support

The Foundation convenes two meetings per year for current Fellows, Foundation staff, and guest speakers. The meetings are meant to encourage collaboration, conversation, and learning among the Fellows. The Foundation will pay for travel for such activities, and Fellows need not budget for such meetings in their proposals.

## Post-Award Review

All William T. Grant Foundation Distinguished Fellows will submit semi-annual progress reports during the course of the Fellowship. These reports are meant to help the Foundation assess the design and effectiveness of the Fellowship. Accordingly, Fellows will briefly describe their main activities during the reporting period (e.g., 1/1/12–6/30/12) and the main activities anticipated in the next six months (e.g., 7/1/12–12/31/12). In addition, the reports should be reflective and evaluative. Is the Fellowship going as planned? Are the objectives guiding the Fellowship being achieved? Which Fellowship activities are particularly useful? Which activities are less useful?

Annual financial reports are required from Distinguished Fellows and their institutions. The financial reports are due within three months of the end of the grant year. Within three months following the conclusion of the Fellowship, the Distinguished Fellow will submit a final, cumulative report summarizing their objectives and activities and evaluating the Fellowship against the guiding objectives. This report will conclude with recommendations to the Foundation regarding the effectiveness of the program and any suggested changes to the program requirements, design, or implementation.

In addition to Fellow reports, at the conclusion of the Fellowship, the primary mentor at each Fellowship site will submit a brief evaluative report. From the mentor's perspective, were the goals of the Fellowship achieved? What recommendations does the mentor have regarding the Distinguished Fellows program requirements, design, or implementation?

## Program Restrictions

The Foundation reserves the right to terminate the award if the Fellow's project changes substantially from that originally proposed. Additionally, approval will be required from the Foundation if the Fellow wishes to transfer the award to another institution. Please note that this Fellowship is not intended to facilitate career transitions (e.g., from research into policy or practice, or vice versa), but such transitions are not precluded if they advance the goal of this Fellowship program.

# SELECTION CRITERIA & ELIGIBILITY

## Applicant

Influential mid-career practitioners, policymakers, and researchers are encouraged to apply. The following definitions apply to all eligible applicants:

- **Mid-career:** “Mid-career” is defined as having 8 to 20 years of cumulative experience in one’s current role as a researcher, policymaker, or practitioner.
- **Influential:** “Influential” is defined as a policymaker, practitioner, or researcher who is seen by colleagues in his/her role as particularly knowledgeable and well-connected to others in the field and who uses knowledge, access, and connections to influence colleagues on matters important to youth. This is a more constrained definition of “influential” than the one the Foundation usually uses. Our usual definition includes the ability to influence people beyond one’s primary role group. It is that sort of ability that we hope to create through this Fellowship program.
- **Practitioner:** “Practitioner” refers to a person working in an organization or system that provides direct services to youth ages 8 to 25 (e.g., school districts, the child welfare system, community-based organizations) or in an organization meant to support such direct service organizations and systems (e.g., training and technical assistance providers, constituent group organizations).
- **Policymaker:** “Policymaker” refers to a person working in a policymaking or policy-implementing organization (e.g., legislative or executive branch staff) or in an organization meant to support and/or influence such agencies (e.g., constituent group organization, advocacy organization).
- **Researcher:** “Researcher” refers to a person working in a setting where he/she manages, designs, or conducts research, evaluations, and/or policy analyses.

# Fellowships and Settings

- All Fellowships must support activities that help the Distinguished Fellow advance the William T. Grant Foundation's Current Research Interests, which can be found on our website: [www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org).
- Policymakers and practitioners proposing work in a research setting should begin the application process by considering the role that research can and should play in improving decision-making or performance in their organizations. Applicants should then address the ways in which Fellowship activities could support their learning about the features of high-quality research, and how this could improve the use of research in their own decision-making. Policymakers and practitioners should have some modest prior exposure to research in order to gain the most from their Fellowship experiences. We encourage applicants to describe prior formal training or work experiences that will support their learning in a research environment.
- Researchers proposing to work in policy and practice settings should begin the application process by considering how their research might improve policy decision-making or organizational effectiveness in practice settings, and then describe how Fellowship activities might enhance their understanding of the research needs of policymakers and practitioners.
- Applicants may propose one or two Fellowship sites that will be willing to "house" and mentor them on-site. The \$25,000 grant that may be awarded to the Fellowship site is not included in the Fellow grant amount of \$175,000 and will be budgeted separately in the proposal. The Fellowship sites should be within the United States.

- All Fellowships must immerse the Distinguished Fellow in the ongoing work of the Fellowship site(s) in a way that appropriately builds the Fellow's knowledge and understanding of the site's work. Proposals that also advance the work of the Fellowship site will be more competitive, but this will not be a primary criterion. The major "product" is the development of the Fellow, not the site(s). We likewise encourage applicants to select host sites whose work relates closely to their interest area and that of their home institution.
- Applicants should propose a Fellowship plan with clear objectives for their development and feasible activities for achieving those objectives at the Fellowship site(s). Applicants should be prepared to demonstrate how these objectives would enhance the work done at their home institution.
- Applicants may propose Fellowship arrangements that extend up to two calendar years to accommodate their personal situation and the nature of their proposed Fellowship. Regardless of duration, each Fellowship will be supported by a grant of up to \$175,000 to the applicant's current employer (inclusive of indirect costs which are capped at 7.5 percent of total direct costs).
- The Fellowship can be used to support the Distinguished Fellow's salary and all other Fellowship-related expenses (including travel, relocation, and away-from-home lodging if required). Across the duration of the Fellowship, applicants must work on the Fellowship activities at the Fellowship site(s) for a **minimum** total of half of a year (i.e., full-time for six months; an average of half-time during a one-year Fellowship; an average of one-quarter time across a two-year Fellowship). If applicants have other sources of funding to support them beyond our award (e.g., sabbatical funds or a related grant), our award is fungible for any Fellowship-related expenses.

## Eligible Employer and Fellowship Site Organizations

We make grant awards to the applicant's employer. Grants are limited, without exception, to tax-exempt private and governmental organizations. Any organization applying for a grant or proposed as a Fellowship site must submit a copy of its Internal Revenue Service determination letter.

## Illustrative, Hypothetical Examples

The following are examples of appropriate Fellowships. The examples are not exhaustive. Applicants should propose original ideas that meet their objectives for professional growth. Information about past and current Fellowship awards is available on our website at [www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org).

- A university professor, expert in research on teaching practices in high school, proposes to work for a school year in two large urban high schools (one semester per school). The principal in each school agrees to mentor the professor. The professor wants to better understand the daily life of a building-level administrator, with an eye toward designing interventions after the Fellowship that are likely to improve principal effectiveness. The professor will participate in the school's daily activities, shadowing the principals and attending their usual meetings.
- A deputy director responsible for program improvement and expansion in a multi-site youth-serving organization wants to learn more about how to evaluate such activities. She proposes to work 25 percent time for one year within a federal agency that funds such studies and a second year at 25 percent time within a nonprofit think tank that conducts such evaluations. While at the funding agency, she will work within a unit to design RFPs for several evaluations, and she will serve as a member of the proposal review team for the agency. At the nonprofit think tank, she will work on one project observing the implementation of an intervention, and on two others as a reviewer of draft reports. These experiences will provide her with a better understanding of the day-to-day conduct of and communication about high-quality evaluations. Senior staff members agree to mentor her in both placements.
- A senior congressional staffer who is an expert in juvenile justice proposes to work for a year at a policy research firm that conducts high-quality evaluations of intervention programs for returning young adult prisoners. A senior research associate at the research firm agrees to mentor him. The Fellow wants to better understand how to design and conduct high-quality evaluation research on the implementation and effectiveness of interventions. He will work as a member of the field staff of two multi-site intervention studies, observing the implementation of two policy interventions. Because the studies are at different stages of completion, he will gain experience in everything from question formation and measure development to data analysis and interpretation of the findings for policy.

- A director of youth advocacy at a respected advocacy organization proposes to work 25 percent time for two years at a university-based research center. He wants to deepen his knowledge of the research base on several issues. He also plans to learn the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to synthesizing and drawing lessons from experimental and quasi-experimental research studies. The Fellow will work on one meta-analysis project that is just beginning and will participate in forming the analytical strategy and the coding procedures. In a second project that is further along, the Fellow will be involved in data analysis and writing policy briefs based upon a completed meta-analysis. A professor noted for conducting high-quality reviews agrees to mentor the advocate.
- A university-based sociologist, expert in using quantitative methods to estimate the effects of parental job loss on youth, proposes to work full-time for six months in a city's Department of Labor. She wants to better understand the daily problems and information needs of line-managers in such an agency. The director of youth employment and the chief of staff to the commissioner of the agency each agree to mentor the Fellow. She will participate in regular staff meetings and work with agency staff to assess their research needs and develop a system for generating data to meet those needs.

- A school superintendent proposes to spend a year between school district assignments at a university where several faculty members are examining potential causes of the racial achievement gap. She wants to better understand the strengths and limits of various ways to study how classroom practices affect student learning. She particularly wants to deepen her understanding of what distinguishes high- and low-quality qualitative research. The Fellow will shadow senior staff on two projects. One is a longitudinal ethnography in two urban high schools; another is a project using a structured approach to classroom observation within a literacy intervention. Two university researchers agree to mentor her.
- A director of child welfare in a large city proposes to work 50 percent time for a year at a university-based research and development (R&D) center. She has some strong ideas about interventions that would improve city-level child welfare agencies and wants to learn about various ways to evaluate such interventions. She plans to collaborate with the researchers on the design of several evaluations. The director of the R&D center agrees to mentor her.
- A senior career staff member of the federal Office of Management and Budget wants to better understand how to set performance standards for youth programs. She proposes two four-month 100 percent time experiences—one with a professor who is an expert in accountability for public schools and a second with an economist at a policy research firm who is an expert on youth employment. In the university setting, the Fellow will co-teach a course on accountability in public education and will be a member of a research team that is producing six case studies of district-level responses to No Child Left Behind. In the research firm, the Fellow will be a member of a research team producing a white paper for a federal agency on the use of performance standards for youth employment programs. As part of that experience, the Fellow will gain experience with various analyses of national longitudinal data.

# APPLICATION PROCESS & REQUIRED MATERIALS

Submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) via our website at [www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org). All LOIs must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. EST on January 5, 2011.

The application process will proceed in two stages: letter of inquiry and invited full proposal. Senior staff at the Foundation will evaluate all letters of inquiry and invite a small group of finalists to submit full proposals. The Foundation will respond to letters of inquiry by the week of February 15, 2011. Invited full proposals are due by April 26, 2011, at 3:00 p.m. EST.

Questions regarding proposed Fellowship plans or the application process may be directed to Sharon Brewster at [sbrewster@wtgrantfdn.org](mailto:sbrewster@wtgrantfdn.org).

To begin the application process, applicants should go to our website and follow these steps:

1. Click on the Login button on the top right of any page, and enter your Login ID and password. New users must register to obtain login information before they can proceed.
2. You will be directed to your homepage. On your homepage, select “Click here to start a new application.”
  - a. Select appropriate funding opportunity: Distinguished Fellows 2011.
  - b. Take the eligibility quiz for Distinguished Fellows.
  - c. After saving this information, you will be brought back to your homepage.
  - d. Under “To Do—Application,” select “Letter of Inquiry, Distinguished Fellows.”
3. You can access the application from your homepage at any time. You may complete the sections of the application in any order. You do not need to complete the application in one session, and can revisit it as often as needed until you are ready to submit.

## Contact Information

Fill in all required information.

## Other Contacts

Contact information for the applicant's mentors should be added on this page (if you have identified a specific person). Click the "Add" button to add contact information for your mentors.

## Project Information

Fill in the required information.

## Uploads

All uploaded documents should:

- use a font no smaller than 12 pt.,
- have margins of at least one inch on all sides,
- be single-spaced, with two lines between paragraphs,
- be in .doc, .rtf, or .pdf format, and
- not include headers or footers. These are automatically generated by the online application system.

## Letter of Inquiry

The LOI should be 3 to 5 pages and describe details of the project, including:

**i. Major objectives for this proposed Fellowship.** What do you hope to learn? Why are these objectives important? What is the primary policy or practice area addressed? Be specific about how learning about research, policy, or practice will improve your work. How will your proposed Fellowship help you address specific questions in your work?

**ii. Description of and rationale for proposed site(s) and activities.** What will you do during the Fellowship? How do the proposed activities relate to your objectives? How have your previous experiences prepared you for these activities?

### **iii. A brief description of the Fellowship site(s) and primary mentors.**

For the LOI, applicants do not need to have a firm commitment from a Fellowship site and mentor. If you have specific plans and commitments, please tell us. If you do not have firm plans, tell us what placement(s) you hope to secure and the sort of mentor(s) you are seeking. It would be helpful to provide illustrative examples of potential sites and mentors and an explanation for why they are appropriate. (If invited to submit a full proposal, all applicants will need firm plans and commitments from host site[s] and mentor[s].)

**iv. A brief statement of eligibility** discussing the number of years you have served in your primary role in research, policy, or practice, and a discussion of how you are influential in that role (leadership positions, organizational affiliations, awards, etc.).

## One-page Curriculum Vitae

Upload a one-page curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé for the applicant. Also upload a CV or résumé for the primary mentor at each Fellowship site (if you identified a specific person).

## Review and Submit

After you complete your uploads, click “View PDF” to review your letter of inquiry. We recommend that you review it carefully—once submitted, it cannot be changed. After reviewing the document, hit the Submit button to complete your application. An automatic email confirmation will be sent to you after you submit your letter of inquiry.

# Full Proposal Procedures

Invited Full Proposals should be submitted by 3:00 p.m. on April 26, 2011. Invited applicants must submit all proposal materials through the Foundation's website. The proposal should consist of the following:

1. **Cover page** stating the applicant's name, contact information, and total dollar amount requested from the William T. Grant Foundation (maximum \$175,000); the name, address, and contact person at the applicant's employer (this institution will be the grantee); and the name, address, and primary mentor for each Fellowship site.
2. **Fellowship Plan** (eight pages maximum)
  - a. Major objectives guiding the proposed Fellowship;
  - b. Description of and rationale for the proposed Fellowship site(s) and activities;
  - c. Description of and rationale for the proposed mentors at each site; and
  - d. A description of how the applicant proposes to evaluate the effectiveness of the Fellowship experience.
3. Any proposed products in addition to required progress reports due every six months from the start date of the Fellowship.
4. CV or résumé for the applicant and the applicant's primary mentor at each Fellowship site.
5. Letters of recommendation from three persons who work in the applicant's field, describing why they believe the applicant meets the Foundation's definition of being an influential within his or her field. Letters of recommendation will now be submitted online by each reference writer. This process will take more time, so invited applicants are advised to start their online full proposals early.
6. A letter from the applicant's employer certifying that the applicant is a successful employee in good standing and certifying the employer's willingness for the applicant to participate in this Fellowship as proposed. The employer's letter should also describe how the employer expects to benefit from this Fellowship, once it is complete and the employee returns to full-time status.
7. Letters from the primary mentor at each proposed Fellowship site certifying their personal and institutional enthusiasm for hosting and mentoring the Fellow as described in the Fellowship plan and describing the mentoring plan.
8. A budget and budget justification. The information requested on these forms is described on the Foundation's website at: [http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org/funding\\_opportunities/how\\_to\\_apply/william\\_t\\_\\_grant\\_distinguished\\_fellows/applying\\_for\\_the\\_distinguished\\_fellows\\_program](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org/funding_opportunities/how_to_apply/william_t__grant_distinguished_fellows/applying_for_the_distinguished_fellows_program)

# William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows

## 2005

Rob Geen, Child Trends Incorporated

*Child, Family, and Youth Policymaking from Behind the Scenes*

Deborah Gorman-Smith, University of Illinois at Chicago

*Advancing Evidence-Based Reforms in Federal Programs Affecting Youth*

Joanne Nicholson, University of Massachusetts Medical School

*Transforming the Child Welfare System to Improve Outcomes for Children and Youth Whose Parents Have Mental Illness*

Jean Rhodes, University of Massachusetts, Boston

*Getting to the Heart and Soul of Mentoring: Advancing Research, Theory, and Practice Through Match Supervision*

Lauren Smith, Boston Medical Center, Boston University School of Medicine

*Bridging Domains: The Intersection of Child and Youth Health and Well-Being and Public Policy*

Constance Yowell, University of Chicago

*Designing Systems to Support Learning and Teaching Grounded in Evidence-Based Practices*

## 2006

Martha Holleman, Safe and Sound: Baltimore's Campaign for Children and Youth

*Improving Conditions of Children and Youth in Distressed Urban Areas: National Framework, Local Experience*

Robin Nixon, National Foster Care Coalition

*Making the Case for Extending Foster Care and Transition Services Beyond Age 18*

# William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows

## 2007

Tamera Coyne-Beasley, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
*The Prevention of School Violence: Creating Environments that are Safe and Conducive to Learning*

David DuBois, University of Illinois at Chicago  
*Promoting Evidence-Based Decision-Making in Youth Mentoring Programs*

Abram Rosenblatt, University of California, San Francisco  
*Policy and Service Delivery for Youth in Probation, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Services*

## 2008

Laurel Leslie, M.D., MPH, Tufts Medical Center  
*Addressing the Needs of Children in Child Welfare: Views from the Front Line*

Susan Maciolek, MPP, University of Southern Maine  
*Improving Child Welfare Outcomes for Children and Families through Effective Service Systems*

David Wallinga, M.D., Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy  
*Promoting Children's Health by Building Healthier Food Environments*

Marc Wheeler, B.A., Big Brothers Big Sisters of Alaska  
*Youth Mentoring Research Project*

Stanton Wortham, Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania  
*Involving Parents in the Schooling of Immigrant Mexican Students*

## 2009

Maria Cancian, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin, Madison  
*Integrating Child Welfare, Income Support, and Child Support to Improve Outcomes*

Elizabeth Devaney, M.A., Providence After School Alliance  
*Using Data to Build the Capacity of After-School and Youth Development Providers*

Peter Salem, M.A., Association of Family and Conciliation Courts  
*Improving Research, Policy, and Practice in Family Courts through Interdisciplinary Collaboration*

---

William T. Grant Distinguished Fellows Staff:  
Sharon Brewster, Grants Coordinator, ODF  
.....gVfYk gYf4 k H fUbhZb"cf[ ]

Editor: Sarah Martino

Design: Nicholas Smith Design + Illustration



WILLIAM T. GRANT FOUNDATION

Supporting research to improve the lives of young people

570 Lexington Avenue, 18th Floor, New York, New York 10022-6837  
212.752.0071 Fax: 212.752.1398 [www.wtgrantfoundation.org](http://www.wtgrantfoundation.org)