



## **Advancing Home Visiting Research to Inform Public Policy** *Request for Proposals*

The Pew Home Visiting Campaign, a project of the Pew Center on the States, promotes smart state investments in quality, home-based programs for new and expectant families. The campaign is soliciting applications for funding of research and evaluation of home visiting services. The goal of this request is to build the evidence needed to inform public policy decisions and advance effective practice in maternal, infant and early childhood home visiting.

### **Purpose of this RFP**

With generous support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Pew Home Visiting Campaign seeks research to strengthen the home visiting evidence base. Under the guidance of a research advisory panel consisting of national experts, leading academicians and policy officials, we aim to answer research questions that will expand the body of knowledge policymakers and practitioners rely on to improve services, achieve better outcomes and make good use of public resources.

### **Scope of Proposal**

The Pew Home Visiting Campaign is interested in large- (\$125,000-\$250,000 total award) intermediate- (\$50,000-\$125,000), and small- (less than \$50,000) scale research projects. All deliverables must be finalized within 18-24 months to be considered for this RFP. While the number of funded projects will be based on the quality of applications, we anticipate awarding 1-2 large, 2-4 intermediate and 6-10 small-scale contracts. Proposals are due no later than December 21 at 5:00 PM EST.

### **Research Priorities**

Proposals in the following priority areas of home visiting research are specifically encouraged:

- *Active ingredients of effective home visits*  
What are the active ingredients, components or attributes of home visiting programs that have the most power to improve key child and maternal outcomes? What is most effective in terms of timing, dosage and intensity?
- *Training and supervision*  
What key qualities or competencies of home visitors and/or supervisors influence family outcomes?

- *Program adaptations*
  - The strongest program effects are often found with first-time mothers. What adaptations increase the power of home visiting for expectant mothers who already have children?
  - How should services be effectively adapted to improve outcomes for different types of families, such as those with diverse racial, ethnic, cultural or language backgrounds (particularly for populations not represented in current research)?
  - What program adaptations must be made to more effectively meet the needs of mothers experiencing substance use, domestic violence or mental health disorders?
  - How can home visiting programs best involve fathers?
- *Family engagement*  
What is most effective in recruiting, retaining and engaging families in home visiting programs?
- *Family life course*  
Can home visiting demonstrate long-term effects for family outcomes? How do home visiting programs influence maternal life course (such as subsequent births, educational attainment, workforce participation or government subsidies for low-income families)?
- *Connecting early childhood services*  
How should home visiting be combined with other services to achieve the best results for families? How much more effective is home visiting when paired with one or more other intervention services, and what is the best way to do this?
- *Cost benefit*  
What is the positive return on investment in home visiting services by states, cities or localities? What are the short- and long-term cost-savings?

This is not an exhaustive list; we encourage other innovative research topics related to the purpose of this RFP, particularly research that can inform home visiting public policies. We are interested in research that examines a range of child outcomes, including birth outcomes, child abuse and neglect, and school readiness. Given the funding timeframe of this RFP, we are particularly interested in projects that can leverage existing data sets or resources, build on established research efforts or expand the scope of existing projects.

### **Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to: national and regional home visiting programs, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, for-profit research organizations, government agencies and policy think tanks.

### **Structure of Proposal**

We request proposals to be a maximum of ten pages in length (12-point Times New Roman font, single-spaced, not including the cover sheet, abstract, or any appendices). Proposals must be written clearly and concisely and include the components listed below. Please use the application forms available on [our website](#). The application form is a protected Word document. Navigate through the form by using the tab function.

### *Cover Sheet*

All applicants must complete the Cover Sheet, which requires full contact information, amount requested, research question/topic to be addressed in the narrative, information on IRB approval and any other current sources of funding.

### *Abstract*

The abstract should be no longer than one page, single-spaced. It must include a clear and concise summary of the research question under investigation, including the goals of the proposal project. It should describe the methodology and/or research design, including a description of the data (and data collection process, if relevant), and the analytic procedures that will be used. *It must also include at least one paragraph on how this proposal will address public policy-relevant research gaps currently in the field.*

### *Proposal narrative*

The body of the proposal must be organized as follows:

Problem Statement, Research Question, Project Goals: Include a clear and concise statement of the problem that the research will address. This section should also include an explanation of the research question(s) and its effect on public policy, including a discussion of why those question(s) are important to policymakers. This section should include background on how the proposed research will add to the home visiting evidence base and a brief review of the relevant literature.

Background on the home visiting model: Include a concise description of the home visiting model(s) to be studied, including program goals, population served, qualifications of the home visitor, supervision, intensity and duration of the program, and existing evidence about the program's effects.

Research Design and Methodology: Include a discussion of the data to be used, how the data will be acquired and the methods for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Include a description of your sample, including sample size and demographic characteristics. Please provide a statement about work that has already been done by you or your team on this topic, if applicable.

Work Plan and Timeline: Include a work plan describing the tasks to be conducted and a timeline for achieving deliverable(s). Applicants will be expected to submit a report draft, final executive summary and full paper. Include a projected date for submission of the deliverable(s) and key staff members and their roles on this project. The staffing plan should include a short bio for each key staff member (resumes can be included as an appendix).

The work plan must include a payment schedule. Payments must be tied to a deliverable and will not be issued until the deliverable is received and approved. Deliverables should be tangible items, such as datasets, reports or PowerPoint presentations. The payment schedule may include an amount due upon execution of the contract; generally, this may not exceed one-third of the total contractual amount. The default payment schedule is one-third upon signature of contract, one-third upon delivery of the draft and one-third upon delivery of final report. Please note that reports will be peer reviewed and that final payments will be made upon receipt of final paper that incorporates revisions from the peer review process.

Budget: You must complete the Budget Template and submit it with your full application. It is imperative to describe all budget costs in detail (who, what, when, where, why and how much) to expedite the contracting process. The final amount should be rounded to the nearest \$100. Applicants are expected to make the most efficient use of the requested funds and to maximize any resources already available to them.

Appendices: Appendices are not counted towards page limit, and may include bibliography or references and resumes of key personnel (please limit resumes to 4 pages). We strongly recommend including letters of cooperation/support from collaborating organizations.

### **Scoring Criteria**

Proposals will be assessed on their relevance to the objectives stated in this RFP. Specific evaluation criteria include:

1. Statement of the research question and project narrative, including clarity of problem statement and connection between proposed research and problem (15%)
2. Potential to inform public policy decisions and significantly advance the home visiting field (30%)
3. Project design and implementation, including soundness of methodology, analytical and technical approach, and feasibility (30%)
4. Budget, including total cost of the project relative to the perceived benefit, appropriateness of the budget and ability to leverage other resources (10%)
5. Capabilities/competencies, including the qualifications and experience of proposed staff and the demonstrated ability of staff and organization to manage the research project (15%)

We will consider additional aspects of the proposal, including:

- Adherence to proposal guidelines
- Research that spans more than one home visiting program or franchise
- Other sources of funding, if applicable

### **Submission and Selection Process**

The Pew Home Visiting Campaign will host an informational conference call on November 17, 2009 at 4:00 PM EST to answer questions from interested applicants. This call is not a prerequisite to submitting a proposal. Please call 1-877-366-0711 and enter passcode 3993 1746# to participate.

Completed proposals are due no later than 5:00 PM (EST) on December 21, 2009 to Grace Lee, Research Associate, at [glee@pewtrusts.org](mailto:glee@pewtrusts.org). Applications must be sent in one document (MS Word or PDF). Confirmation will be sent via e-mail verifying receipt of the proposal. Any applicant that has not received confirmation by December 28, 2009 should contact Ms. Lee.

Pew Home Visiting Campaign staff and the advisory panel will review proposals and make recommendations for awards. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, applicants are discouraged from collaborating with members of the research advisory panel on their applications (see roster, page six). Final selection is made by the Pew Home Visiting Campaign. Decisions will be communicated by mid-February.

The Pew Charitable Trusts will contract with investigators of successful research proposals to conduct their projects over a period of 18-24 months. Contract requirements include a commitment of the investigators to provide a draft, final executive summary, full paper, and a PowerPoint presentation (if requested). The dissemination process for each report will depend on the nature of the findings, but we may ask researchers to commit to making at least one public presentation of the data.

Awardees will be required to participate in bi-monthly status conference calls with the Pew home visiting staff. We encourage funded researchers to submit their work to peer-reviewed journals; however, Pew may request the right of first publication. The Pew Home Visiting Campaign, in collaboration with funded researchers, may develop an issue brief based on the findings from each funded project.

**Please note**

This RFP does not represent a contract between The Pew Charitable Trusts and any applying organization. Pew retains the right to modify or cancel the RFP at any time. Pew is not liable for any costs incurred for the preparation and submission of a response to this RFP. If selected, the contractor may not use funds to cover costs incurred during the application process.

We reserve the right to request additional information or documentation from the applicant throughout the selection process to help evaluate the proposal. Pew retains the right to all deliverables produced on behalf of the funding from this RFP.

**Contact information**

For assistance with the requirements of this RFP, please contact Grace Lee, Research Associate, at 202-552-2163 or [glee@pewtrusts.org](mailto:glee@pewtrusts.org) or Jill Antonishak, Research Manager, at 202-552-2146 or [jantonishak@pewtrusts.org](mailto:jantonishak@pewtrusts.org).

**About the Pew Center on the States**

The Pew Center on the States (PCS), an internal operating division of The Pew Charitable Trusts, identifies and advances effective policy approaches to critical issues facing states. PCS makes use of the basic tools required to help states explore and advance effective policies, regardless of the issue: credible, timely and user-friendly research; assessments of public support for change; strategic outreach and dissemination to ensure that good information is widely communicated to state decision-makers, media, influential stakeholders and the public; the capacity to bring together diverse perspectives and find common ground; and the ability to identify approaches that have proven successful elsewhere. The Pew Charitable Trusts is driven by the power of knowledge to solve today's most challenging problems. Pew applies a rigorous, analytical approach to improving public policy, informing the public and stimulating civic life. Based in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., Pew produces fact-based research and develops practical solutions to challenging issues.



**Research Advisory Panel**  
Pew Home Visiting Campaign

*Richard Barth*, University of Maryland School of Social Work

*Catherine Bodkin*, Virginia Department of Health

*Melissa Brodowski*, USDHHS Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Abuse and Neglect

*Jeanne Brooks-Gunn*, Teachers College, Columbia University

*Deborah Daro*, Chapin Hall, University of Chicago

*Beverly Fortson*, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Violence Prevention

*Naomi Goldstein*, USDHHS Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning and Research Evaluation

*Deanna Gomby*, Deanna Gomby Consulting

*Michael López*, National Center for Latino Child & Family Research

*Lauren Supplee*, USDHHS Administration for Children and Families, Office of Planning and Research Evaluation

*Francie Zimmerman*, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation