

Limited Submission Review Instructions & Scoring Matrix

William T. Grant Scholars Program 2020

Principal Investigator(s):

BACKGROUND & INSTRUCTIONS FOR REVIEWERS

A “limited submission” refers to a grant program that places a limitation on the number of proposal applications a single eligible entity can submit each cycle. The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) has a process in place to allow for an internal competition among interested PIs to determine which application(s) will move forward. Once a limited submission opportunity is identified, an internal call for pre-proposals is sent out to potential PIs. Those interested in being considered for full submission are required to submit a pre-proposal (ranging from one to five pages, depending on the type of program and sponsor) by a specified date. If more applications are received than the institution is allowed to submit to the sponsor, the applications are moved forward to a peer review process in order to make final selection(s).

That peer review process is what you are taking part in now. While we do want you to be aware that **the proposals you review here are *not* finalized and will be expanded before they are submitted to the sponsor**, we ask that you be as critical in your review as you would be if these applications were moving forward to a sponsor now. We are **especially interested in your feedback on weaknesses of the applications and where improvements can be made** either before they move forward through submission to this program or others.

If you are reviewing more than one application for this same program, we ask that you use the applications as a reference for one another in your scoring, knowing that the pool will be ranked based on scores received to determine which move(s) forward to the sponsor.

A final reminder for foreign nationals before you proceed:

We want to ensure that you are eligible to receive compensation for this service. Visa type determines your eligibility for honoraria. Most common visa types eligible for honoraria: B-1, B-2, F-1 (with approval from current school/employer and additional documentation provided), J-2, WB-WT. Any visa holders not eligible for honoraria pay outside of their employing organization may NOT be eligible for payment from UTSA. Further guidance from UTSA on allowable reimbursements for most frequently used visas can be found here:

<https://international.utsa.edu/visas/guide-to-most-used-visas/index.html>. If you believe you may not be eligible for honoraria, please notify ORAU staff immediately.

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SCORING

Selection of applications to be submitted to the William T. Grant Scholars Program 2020 will be based on a 5-point scoring scale for criteria given below.

No. of applications allowed per institution this cycle: 1

- Ratings should be given in whole numbers (no decimals).
- Reviewers should consider not only the relative number of strengths and weaknesses, but also the importance of these strengths and weaknesses to the criteria or to the overall impact when determining a score.
 - For example, a major strength may outweigh many minor and correctable weaknesses

Minor weakness: easily addressable weakness, does not substantially lessen impact

Moderate weakness: lessens impact

Major weakness: Severely limits impact

SCORING RUBRIC

Score	Description
1	Poor – No evidence or information provided
2	Fair – Minimal evidence; limited potential; vague; weak concepts; limited likelihood of success; limited in innovative thinking; lacks sufficient information
3	Good – Some evidence; partially developed concepts; some potential for effectiveness and success; some inconsistencies; needs work; some innovation present; requires additional information/clarification
4	Very Good – Convincing concepts with enough examples of evidence to indicate a good chance for success; clear and complete; innovative
5	Excellent – Excellent concepts; exceptional evidence; well-thought out with an extremely high likelihood of success; exemplary; highly innovative

Borrowed from State of Ohio's Straight A Fund Application Scoring & Evaluation Process, Criteria & Rubrics.

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SCORED REVIEW CRITERIA

Reviewers will consider each of the review criteria below based on the **Scoring Rubric** above, and give a separate score for each within the **Evaluation Scores** table below.

1. Applicant

Applicant demonstrates potential to become an influential researcher. An ability to conduct and communicate creative, sophisticated research is proven through prior training and publications. Competitive applicants have a promising track record of first authored, high-quality empirical publications in peer-reviewed outlets. The quality of publications is more important than the quantity.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

2. Research Plan: Alignment to Focus Areas

Research area is a strong fit with one of the Foundation's current focus areas:

1. Proposed research on **reducing inequality** should aim to build, test, and increase understanding of a program, policy, or practice to reduce inequality in the academic, social, behavioral, or economic outcomes of young people ages 5–25 in the United States.
2. Proposed research on **improving the use of research evidence** should inform strategies to improve the use of research evidence in ways that benefit young people ages 5–25 in the United States.

Proposals reflect a mastery of relevant theory and empirical findings, and clearly state the theoretical and empirical contributions they will make to the existing research base. Projects may focus on either generating or testing theory, depending on the state of knowledge about a topic.

Although we do not expect that any one project will or should impact policy or practice, the findings should have relevance for policy or practice.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

3. Research Plan: Methodology and Evidence

Research plan reflects high standards of evidence and rigorous methods, commensurate with the proposal's goals. The latter years or projects of the research plan may, by necessity, be described in less detail than those of the first few, but successful applicants provide enough specificity for reviewers to be assured of the rigor and feasibility of the plan:

- Research designs, methods, and analysis plans clearly fit the research questions under study.
- Discussions of case selection, sampling, and measurement include a compelling rationale that they are well-suited to address the research questions or hypotheses. For example, samples are appropriate in size and composition to answer the study's questions. Qualitative case selection—whether critical, comparative, or otherwise—are appropriate to answer the proposed questions.
- The quantitative and/or qualitative analysis plan demonstrate awareness of the strengths and limits of the specific analytic techniques and how they will be applied in the current project.

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- If proposing mixed methods, plans for integrating the methods and data are clear and compelling.
- Where relevant, there is attention to generalizability of findings and to statistical power to detect meaningful effects.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

4. **Research Plan: Other**

- Research plan demonstrates adequate consideration of the gender, ethnic, and cultural appropriateness of concepts, methods, and measures.
- Research plan is feasible. The work can be successfully completed given the resources and time frame. Some research plans require additional funding, and in those cases, applicants have viable plans for acquiring that support.
- Research plan is cohesive and multiple studies (if proposed) are well-integrated.
- Research plan will significantly extend the applicant's expertise in new and significant ways. Applicant provides specific details about how the research activities will stretch his or her expertise.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

5. **Mentoring Plan**

- Applicant proposes one to two mentors for the first two years of the award. Two is typical and recommended. Each mentor has appropriate credentials, expertise, and resources to aid the applicant's acquisition of the new expertise; has a strong track record of mentorship; and demonstrates a commitment to mentoring the applicant.
- The mentoring plan demonstrates that all parties have identified and agreed on specific goals that expand the applicant's expertise in the ways outlined in the research plan.
- A compelling rationale and specific details about the mentoring activities are provided. Careful consideration should be devoted to the types of activities and time that is required to learn different types of skills (e.g., new methods versus disciplinary perspectives). Examples of activities include advising on new disciplinary norms, data collection plans, analytic techniques, and publication; providing feedback on manuscripts; arranging training opportunities; facilitating access to new professional networks; recommending readings; and more general career advising.
- Applicants should propose relationships and activities that are unlikely to occur without the award. Deepening a relationship with a casual colleague, or developing a new relationship, adds greater value to an applicants' mentoring network than proposing a former advisor or committee chair.

Strengths: [Click here to enter text.](#)

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Weaknesses: [Click here to enter text.](#)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS TO APPLICANT

Reviewers may provide guidance to the applicant or recommend against submission without fundamental revision.

Additional Comments to Applicants (Optional)

[Click here to enter text.](#)

EVALUATION SCORES

Criteria	Your Score
1. Applicant	
2. Research Plan: Alignment to Focus Areas	
3. Research Plan: Methodology and Evidence	
4. Research Plan: Other	
5. Mentoring Plan	
TOTAL	