

cjenkins 2/15/2005 Sociology Qualitative PD



National Science Foundation
WHERE DISCOVERIES BEGIN



Strengthening Qualitative Research through Methodological Innovation and Integration

Synopsis of Program:

The Sociology Program is seeking research proposals that advance qualitative methods in sociological research. The Program invites proposals from investigators that demonstrate creative thinking and innovation in research projects that use qualitative methods or mix methods approaches that include qualitative techniques. Projects should also have a theoretically-motivated substantive focus.

Introduction:

The Sociology and the Methodology, Measurement and Statistics Programs within the Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences at the National Science Foundation (NSF) convened a workshop in 2003 on the Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research. The report is available at: <https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/nsf04219.pdf> ~~<~~<https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2004/nsf04219/nsf04219.pdf>~~>~~. Twenty-four social and behavioral scientists with considerable expertise and experience in conducting qualitative research submitted reflective and provocative papers, met for two days, provided comments and offered recommendations about how to further advance qualitative research. The purpose of the workshop was twofold. One objective was to provide guidance to both reviewers and investigators about the characteristics of strong qualitative research proposals and the criteria that should be used to evaluate qualitative projects submitted to NSF. A second objective was to provide recommendations to address the broader issue of how to strengthen qualitative methods in sociology and the social sciences in general. A broader goal of the workshop was to develop research capacity, tools, and infrastructure in the social sciences.

The workshop generated recommendations for supporting and strengthening qualitative research that included a call for proposals and research on:

- cutting edge topics in qualitative research methodologies,
- new technologies for qualitative data collection, storage, and integration,
- innovative technologies for qualitative data analysis and the integration of data collection and analysis,
- novel and creative ways of combining existing qualitative and quantitative methods,
- the development of hybrid methodologies that bring together the strengths of qualitative and quantitative methods,
- research design strategies that optimize the value and power of qualitative data,
- the creation of a national longitudinal data archive on naturally occurring social phenomena, systematically and thematically organized.

These recommendations form the basis of this special competition in the Sociology Program. The purpose of the competition is to encourage creative thinking and innovation in research projects that use qualitative methods or mixed method approaches that include qualitative techniques. The estimated number of awards and average award size/duration are subject to the availability of funds. Support may be requested for primary data collection, analysis of existing data, or other activities consistent with the description above.

Program Description:

The Sociology Program is seeking regular research proposals that advance qualitative methods in sociological research. It is especially interested in projects that have both a theoretically-motivated substantive focus and that 1) contribute to the development of new qualitative methods, 2) strengthen the validity and reliability of qualitative methods, 3) present new techniques for analyzing qualitative data (broadly defined, including observational, ethnographic, visual, textual, interview, or other qualitative data), 4) evaluate the strengths and power of alternative data collection and/or analysis strategies, 5) employ research designs using qualitative data that are falsifiable and/or adjudicate among competing explanations, and/or 6) outline innovative combinations of methodologies. In the case of the latter, projects may be predominately qualitative and make connections to quantitative research, predominately quantitative with strong links to qualitative research, or can draw equally on both types of data. What is most important is that the linkage between various types of methods is clear and strong. Projects should demonstrate their potential impacts on and contributions to the advancement of qualitative social science research methods.

Full Proposal Instructions:

The Project Description section of the proposal must not exceed NSF's standard length of 15 pages. In the Project Description proposals must make a case for how their project contributes to the advancement of qualitative methods (i. e., is innovative, integrative, or provides new linkages between different methodologies and data) rather than simply an extension of previous research activities. Proposals should discuss how their designs, data collection, and/or analysis could potentially impact the conduct of research that employs qualitative approaches. Investigators also should address issues of replicability, i. e., how others might reproduce the research.

Proposals should follow guidelines in the [Grant Proposal Guide](https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pgp) <https://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pgp> and must address the two major NSF criteria of Scientific Merit and the Broader Impacts of the research. All proposals have to describe how and when the project results will be distributed publicly. All data must be deposited in an accessible archive. Appendices will not be authorized but proposals may reference supplementary materials, such as questionnaires, pilot results, interview schedules, and/or other relevant information.

Special Note:

Principal Investigators should select the program announcement/solicitation number (**PD 98-1331**) in the program announcement/solicitation block on the proposal Cover Sheet. Compliance with this requirement is necessary to avoid delays in the processing of your proposal.

Full Proposal Target Date(s):

- August 15th & January 15th Yearly

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