

Grant Award Guidelines

Letters of Intent: July 15, 2016
Researcher Notifications: August 1, 2016
Full Proposals: August 22, 2016.

About the Collaborative

The College and University Research Collaborative (The Collaborative) was created to provide non-partisan academic research for informed policy decisions. Developed in response to calls from both public officials and community leaders to leverage the research capacity of the state's 11 colleges and universities, The Collaborative is a statewide partnership that connects public policy and academic research for Rhode Island.

The Collaborative offers research opportunities for scholars from Rhode Island's colleges and universities to address challenging questions facing Rhode Island state leaders. Within each Collaborative research area, multiple projects will be funded in order to provide policy leaders with non-partisan, unbiased research to support their decision making. Research areas and their accompanying questions have been identified through consensus by a Panel of Policy Leaders appointed by: *Governor Gina Raimondo, Senate President M. Teresa Paiva Weed, and the Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello.*

This year, the selected research areas are:

- **Workforce**
- **Education**
- **Healthcare**
- **Criminal Justice**
- **Engineering**
- **Regional Competiveness**

(Detailed questions for each of these topic areas are included starting on page 8)

The Collaborative is now accepting proposals that examine one or more of the research questions posed by policy leaders.

Scholars funded by The Collaborative will participate in a multi-step process with the ultimate goal of better aligning the work of local scholars with questions posed by our Panel of Policy Leaders, and to provide research in an engaging, accessible format that makes key findings clear to a general audience. These steps include **joining our scholar network, developing a letter of intent, and submitting a research proposal.**

I. SCHOLAR NETWORK

The first component of developing research for The Collaborative is to join our Scholar Network, made up of researchers from Rhode Island's 11 institutions of higher education with expertise in a variety of research areas. Scholars participating in the network are prepared to work with policy leaders and community organizations to help shape economic development and share their expertise with key decision-makers to help improve Rhode Island. The Scholar Network also provides an opportunity for researchers to connect with scholars from multiple disciplines and from other campuses, gain resources for research, and share your insights with a broad audience. For more information on joining the Scholar Network, contact Amber Caulkins at amber@collaborativeri.org or 401.588.1792. Joining the Scholar Network can occur as part of submitting your Letter of Intent, or if you are not planning to submit a proposal at this time you can still join the Scholar Network.

II. LETTER OF INTENT

Prior to drafting full research proposals, participant(s) are required to submit a Letter of Intent that outlines the following information:

1. Name(s) of researchers and titles; affiliated organization(s); and contact information;
2. Proposed project title;
3. Proposed research type and opportunity (listed below), as well as rationale for selected research focus;
4. Description of how proposed project will address a question(s) from policy leaders;
5. Description of your expertise in this subject area (Have you conducted research, published papers, or taught classes on your topic?)
6. Completed research objectives document (attached)
7. Complete Scholar Network form (attached)

The Letter of Intent will be reviewed by our Panel of Policy Leaders for approval. Letters must be submitted by **July 15, 2016**. **Researchers will be notified by August 1, 2016**.

III. RESEARCH TYPES

Each research project will focus on a specific type of research that will address the questions from policy leaders. Any questions related to what type of research you will be doing can be directed to Amber Caulkins at amber@collaborativeri.org or (401) 588-1792.

A. CORE INSIGHTS

Core insights respond to Policy Leader's questions with research that closely aligns with state priorities. This type of research also provides implications for challenging state issues.

B. CONTEXT INSIGHTS

Context insights explores the questions of Policy Leaders by providing a unique academic perspective to the research project. *Context insights* provide a background for challenging state issues and help to support decision making.

C. RESOURCE INSIGHTS

Resource insights share compelling research that has important implications for Rhode Island. The goal of this type of research is to expand the Scholar Network and strengthen our scholar knowledge base. These types of projects do not need to specifically address questions of policy leaders, but should connect to topic areas. **In order to be eligible for this type of research, interested participant(s) must discuss their research ideas with Amber Caulkins, The Collaborative program director, prior to submitting letter of intent.**

D. STUDENT RESEARCH INSIGHTS

Student Research Insights are meant to provide an opportunity for students to be more actively engaged in research to support policy leaders. These types of projects include opportunities for scholars to work closely with students through research that involves CORE or CONTEXT INSIGHTS by producing DESCRIPTIVE or RESEARCH ANALYSIS research projects. This might take the form of an honors undergraduate research project, graduate thesis or independent study, a course or other creative ideas from scholars to engage students.

IV. RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis for the Collaborative focuses on analysis of existing data. This research will result in visual representations of data that is analyzed in a way that makes for easy reference by policy leaders. These are short-term projects that are often completed by undergraduate or graduate students who are mentored by faculty members. Projects could range from simple data-plotting exercises to formal undergraduate or graduate student projects. This work will be enhanced visually through working with our graphic designers.

Funding Levels: \$1,000 - \$3,000

Format:

- This research will provide a description of the data collected and a discussion of the analysis that includes implications for policy leaders as well as suggestions for further analysis (500-1,000 words).
- Data will be represented through charts, figures, pictures, maps, etc. that illustrate the findings in a visually appealing format.
- Findings will be shared using concise, straightforward language that is free of academic jargon.

- The researchers will work with graphic designers and the Collaborative to create their final product.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

This type of research will result in an analysis of existing research with discussion around implications for current challenges in Rhode Island. *Research Analysis* articles will offer new insights within the Rhode Island context and will provide discussion around how existing research can be utilized in the state. Some data collection and analysis may also take place.

Funding Levels: \$2,000 - \$5,000

Format: Researchers will also work with The Collaborative and graphic designers to create a final Research Brief. It will include the following:

- Concise, straightforward language that is free of academic jargon.
- Definitions and background on unfamiliar terms, concepts, or theories.
- Relevant context and background information for readers unfamiliar with the topic.
- Concrete examples illustrating abstract concepts or complex research. These can take the form of anecdotes (real or hypothetical), news stories, cultural references, simple statistics, etc.
- Numeric or visual representations of data and relevant background statistics.
- Connections between the research that was reviewed and topical issues such as relevant policy debates and prominent issues in public discourse.
- Discussion of the implications for Rhode Island.

Timeframe: Up to 6 months

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

Collaborative Research projects are focused, intensive research projects that examine the research question in an original way. Each research project will result in the creation of a Final Report and Research Brief that is created in partnership with The Collaborative and graphic designers. *Collaborative Research* is conducted with two or more faculty, ideally from separate institutions. Priority will be given to proposals that include at least one other institution.

Funding Levels: \$5,000 - \$25,000*

Format of Final Research: Researchers will create a final report with guidelines supplied by The Collaborative. Researchers will also work with The Collaborative and graphic designers to create a *Research Brief(s)* from their final report, which will include:

- Concise, straightforward language that is free of academic jargon.

- Text that is made easier to read by keeping sentences and paragraphs short and incorporating bulleted or numbered lists when appropriate.
- Avoidance of terms, concepts, or theories that may be unfamiliar to non-academic readers. If you must include unfamiliar terms or concepts, make sure to define them and/or provide the appropriate background information.
- Presentation of data and methods in summary form and avoidance of complex technical details.
- Concrete examples of the programs, policies, issues, or data you are discussing.

Timeframe: Up to 9 months

V. FULL PROPOSAL

A selection of researchers will be asked to submit a full proposal that outlines in detail their project approach.

Proposal Selection Criteria

Proposals should be no more than ten pages of text plus a budget outline and CV of each researcher. Meritorious proposals will include the detailed guidelines listed under each research type listed below and will include a:

1. Clear statement of the question being addressed
2. The type of research that is being conducted (*Core Insight, Context Insight, Resource Insight or Student Research Insight*)
3. The type of research opportunity (*Descriptive Analysis, Research Analysis, or Collaborative Research*).
4. Project approach, including the proposed work plan and timelines to complete final report (if applicable) and supporting Data Visualizations and/or Research Brief (if applicable).
5. A detailed description of:
 - i. Members of proposed research team.
 - ii. Any data sets that will be needed to complete research.
 - iii. Proposed concept of how to address research question.

Meritorious Descriptive Analysis Proposals Will Have Considered and Responded to the Following:

1. Identification of the data set(s) that you want to analyze;
2. Description of how this data and the analysis that will take place supports and connects to the questions of policy leaders;
3. Identification of who will be conducting the analysis;
4. Determination of whether or not you want to partner with another researcher

Timeframe: Up to 3 Months

Meritorious Research Analysis Proposals Will Have Considered and Responded to the Following:

1. Identify which question(s) you will be addressing through your article;
2. Describe how the focus of your article is relevant to the original questions of policy leaders and to current policy debates in Rhode Island;
3. Include at least three examples of existing academic studies you will be referencing in the article;
4. Include detailed research methods for any original research to be conducted (such as surveys or interviews);
5. Demonstrate the applicability and importance of this topic to Rhode Island's economic development;
6. Describe your expertise in this subject area (Have you conducted research, published papers, or taught classes on your topic?); and
7. Demonstrate how the academic community and/or the national or RI media has covered this topic in the past (What has been missing from the conversation that you would like to add?)

Meritorious Collaborative Research proposals will have considered and responded to the following conditions:

1. Identify which question(s) you will be addressing through your research project;
2. Describe how the focus of your research is relevant to the original questions of policy leaders and to current policy debates in Rhode Island;
3. Include at least five examples of existing academic studies you will be referencing in the article;
4. Include detailed research methods for research to be conducted (such as surveys or interviews);
5. Demonstrate the applicability and importance of this topic to Rhode Island's economic development;
6. Describe your expertise in this subject area (Have you conducted research, published papers, or taught classes on your topic);
7. Determine which data sets that you will need to collect and analyze;
8. Identify team members (*These projects require a team of at least two (2) researchers. Please contact the Collaborative if you need help identifying a partner.*)

Budget

All proposals must include proposed costs to complete described project. Funds can be used to support faculty and undergraduate or graduate student efforts. Funds can also be used to support projects that align with the research areas and seek to answer the questions in unique ways by incorporating student involvement. Funds can be used for data collection efforts.

Due to the limited funds available, there will be no overhead charges from applicant institutions.

Estimated number of awards: 20-25 in the range of \$2,000 to \$15,000.

***An Award will be made for one \$25,000 Collaborative Research Project (Research Teams must include researchers from more than one institution, and priority will be given to teams where at least one researcher has received an award from The Collaborative in previous years).**

Researchers interested in applying for funding at this level should discuss their research plan with Amber Caulkins prior to submitting their letter of intent.

Project Timeline

- All proposals are due via electronic submission no later than 5:00 pm, **Friday, July 15, 2016**
- Full Proposals Due **August 22, 2016**.

Questions for Upcoming Research

HEALTHCARE

1. What are the outcomes of at-home care vs. nursing homes for the elderly population? (Provide a statistical analysis and comparison of other states, examine outcomes from multiple areas including quality of life, cost, state oversight, etc) What is the admitting criteria for entrance and is admittance based on diagnosis or are there other considerations?
2. What are the current and projected long term care needs needs of Rhode Island's elderly population? (Include assisted daily living facilities and the discuss the role, if any, of senior centers) Can this be translated to the number of nursing home beds and community services needed?
3. Provide an evaluation of Rhode Island's opioid overdose prevention program. What have other states done to measure similar programs? What can be measured to determine effectiveness? Is there any preliminary data/studies from other states? What treatment programs have proven successful and why (i.e. community mental health centers)?
4. How can Rhode Island address some of the social determinants of health to improve outcomes for early childhood development?

ENGINEERING

1. Explore the future of engineering in Rhode Island's economy. What is the role of engineering in workforce development? (Working group will be formed to identify potential questions for review from policy leaders)

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

1. Should kindergarten be mandatory? What are the developmental and social implications of starting school earlier/and or mandatory kindergarten? How do we know when children are ready for kindergarten programs? How does mandatory kindergarten, and early childhood education connect to truancy, absenteeism and education later in life?
2. What are current best practices related to early childhood education in Rhode Island?
3. What is the role of home-based services?
4. How can longitudinal data be used to better understand early childhood education outcomes in RI?
5. How can we obtain a better understanding of the cognitive and neurological development of children in order to better provide early education programs that are most impactful? How do we best use our state dollars to improve our early childhood programs?
6. How does early childhood education connect to college readiness, acceptance, graduation rates?

7. What are other states doing as it relates to early childhood education and connections to college?
8. How do our curricula compare to the best practice states? What makes us unique?
9. What is being done to curb suspensions? What are other states doing as far as statewide policies, or individual districts for student discipline?
10. How does student attendance and discipline affect college entry readiness?

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

1. What are the best strategies to reduce recidivism?
2. What are barriers in housing and employment opportunities for those released from prison?
3. What are the implications of adult vs. juvenile criminal justice system for the youth?
4. What is the economic impact of criminal justice system in Rhode Island?
5. How does our prison system compare to the rest of the country and specifically how do we rank against our neighbors in terms of costs/ services/ programs and outcomes in order to prevent re-entry?

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

1. How can we create more diversification in legal, judicial workforce?
2. How does this connect to broader ideas on labor markets, education, barriers in legal profession?
3. What are short-term and long-term solutions to increasing diversification of the workforce broadly and specifically in legal profession?

REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

1. What barriers exist for increasing the number of patents issued to researchers at colleges and universities in Rhode Island? How are other states working with colleges and universities to increase the number of patents received?
2. How does Rhode Island compare nationally with wages and benefits for the private sector? What factors influence any variability? What other factors, including cost of living, need to be considered when making comparisons of wages across states?
3. How does the app-based and sharing economy business model impact the economy?
4. What are best practices for managing the regulations needed to meet the changing app-based and sharing economy business models?
5. How can states balance regulation while encouraging new types of business to emerge?

Research Project Objectives

1. Researcher:

2. Project Title:

3. Research Topic:

a. *What is the general topic of your research?*

b. *What is your expertise on the topic?*

c. *What is the Rhode Island-specific question you will address?*

4. Policy Context:

What background will you provide connecting your research to current policy debates?

a. *National context:*

b. *State context:*

5. Academic Literature:

What areas of the existing literature will you review and discuss?

a. *Topic:*

Studies to be cited:

b. *Topic:*

Studies to be cited:

c. *Topic:*

Studies to be cited:

6. Statistics and Data

What data will you analyze and what statistics will you present?

a. *Data:*

Source:

Analysis plan:

b. *Data:*

Source:

Analysis plan:

c. *Data:*

Source:

Analysis plan:

7. Field Research

What original field research will you conduct (if any)?

Goal:

Type of research (survey, interviews, etc.):

Participants:

Target sample size:

Participant recruitment plan:

Topics covered (attach instrument if possible):

8. Impact

a. *What is the goal of your research? What do you hope it can offer to policy makers?*

b. *What kind of actionable insights do you want the reader to walk away with?*

Name: _____

Title: _____

Institution: _____

Email: _____

Expertise:

Published Research, Current Research Interests, or Available Data-Sets:

I would like to share my research or data analysis in a Collaborative 'Scholar Snapshot'

