



## Political Science Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant Application Information

For comprehensive information about the program, please visit the [DDRIG page](#) on the American Political Science Association website or contact [dissertations@apsanet.org](mailto:dissertations@apsanet.org).

**Do not include your name or institution in any part of your application materials. This includes the file names of uploaded materials. Your project may be returned without review if your name or institution are included in your application materials.**

All proposals for APSA Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants must include the following:

### Proposal Summary

*No longer than 500 words*

The proposal summary should be a succinct overview of the project, including the central research question, a brief note on how the project fits with existing research on the issue, a short overview of the research plan, and an indication of how the grant is expected to improve the overall dissertation.

### Project Description and Research Plan

*No longer than 10 pages, single-spaced*

The project description should describe the overall project focusing on how the grant-supported activities fulfill the main review criteria. **Do not include your name or institution anywhere in your project description.** The project description should include the following information in clearly-labeled sections:

- The title of your project.
- A general description of the research question and how it fits into the existing literature, and the theory, hypotheses and/or argument the dissertation will apply, and the method(s) or approach(es) used to answer the research question.
- A full description of the research activities and the methodological approach(es) that would be supported by the grant, including their purpose in the context of the overall research project.
- A discussion of any pilot programs, pre-analysis, or initial data collection that you have completed and how the grant supported activities are necessary to confirm or build on initial findings.
- A well-developed research plan and timeline for the grant-supported activities.
- An explicit explanation of the Intellectual Merit and Broader Impact of the proposed research **with clearly labeled sections for each**. Intellectual Merit will be evaluated based on the project's potential to advance knowledge and understanding within political science or across fields (including the field of political science), while Broader Impact will be evaluated based on the project's potential to benefit society more broadly. More information on the NSF framework for understanding Broader Impact and Intellectual Merit is available [here](#).

All references cited in the project description and research plan should be included in a separate citation page, which will not count against the page limit. **Project descriptions must be PDF files.**

### **Adviser Support Form**

Proposals must include a signed Adviser Support Form. The purpose of this form is to affirm the research scholar's academic progress and the adviser's support for the research scholar's skills and ability to conduct the proposed research. The Adviser Support Form is not meant to serve as a letter of recommendation but should attest to the adviser's knowledge of and support for the application. The [Adviser Support Form](#) can be found on APSA's DDRIG page.

### **Institutional Support Form**

Proposals will require a completed form from the research scholar's graduate institution confirming the research scholar's academic progress and noting the institution's willingness to accept and disburse the grant funds. The form should be downloaded, completed and signed, and uploaded to the application. The [Institutional Support Form](#) can be found on APSA's DDRIG page.

### **Other Sources of Support**

Proposals will be required to indicate any current and pending grant support for the research scholar, including but not limited to any research funding related to the relevant dissertation project. Proposals will also be required to disclose any past forms of support for the dissertation project, including any other DDRIG awards.

### **Budget**

Proposals must include a proposed budget, which will detail the specific expenses for which the award funds will be used, including any costs associated with research materials or equipment, research assistance, or travel. Proposed budgets should also include an expected timeline for expenditures and indicate whether the research scholar expects the grant to be active for one year or two years. Proposed expenses should not exceed \$20,000. APSA may only be able to give awards of up to \$10,000 if APSA does not receive the funds for the administration of this grant from the National Science Foundation.

APSA Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grants will cover only direct costs for research activities. The grant is not intended to provide the full costs of a student's doctoral dissertation research. Project budgets should be developed at scales appropriate for the work to be conducted and may only include costs directly associated with the conduct of dissertation research. For APSA grants, overhead or indirect costs are not considered allowable expenses.

The grant is intended to provide funding for research costs not normally covered by the grantee's university. Examples of the kinds of expenses that may be included in a proposal budget are the following:

- costs associated with travel and related expenses to conduct research at field sites, archives, specialized collections, and/or facilities away from the student's campus
- costs for data-collection activities, including the conduct of surveys, questionnaires, and/or focus groups or the purchase of extant data
- costs for equipment necessary for the conduct of the project that will be devoted to the project over the duration of the award
- costs for payments to research subjects and/or informants
- costs for non-routine materials and supplies required for the conduct of the project
- costs for data transcription
- analysis and research services not otherwise available
- costs for training in qualitative and quantitative methods required to complete the dissertation

Applicants should download the [Excel budget template](#), enter the appropriate information, and then upload the Excel file to their application.

### **Budget Justification**

*No longer than 3 pages, single-spaced*

Along with the proposed budget, proposals must include a budget justification, explaining and justifying each budget line. The budget justification should explain each of the budget line items and provide details sufficient to justify the rationale for acquiring the item or service under the proposed project. **The budget justification must be a PDF file.**

### **Professional Development Plan**

*No longer than 300 words*

Proposals must include a brief professional development plan describing steps the research scholar plans to take to advance his or her research career. This should include an explanation of how the research scholar envisions the dissertation project fitting into an expected long-term research agenda as well as an indication of a professional development opportunity (or opportunities) at which the research could be presented and improved. In addition, the professional development plan may identify further training that will enhance the research scholar's long-term research agenda, plans and opportunities for creating or joining professional networks, and plans and opportunities for sharing research in public spaces.

### **Data Management Plan**

*No longer than 1000 words*

Proposals will require a data management plan that describes the data that will be generated by the research, how the data will be managed, secured, and shared, and other pertinent information about the content and handling of the data. The data management plan should include:

- The types of data, samples, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project.
- The standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies).
- Policies for access and sharing, including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements.
- Policies and provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives.
- Plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of access to them.

### **Research and Professional Ethics Requirements**

*No longer than 500 words*

APSA is committed to promoting and supporting the highest levels of research and professional ethics. Applicants will be required to provide a statement affirming their commitment to research ethics and describing the application of the principles of research ethics in their projects. This should include addressing questions around ethical implementation of human subjects research as well as whether the applicant knows of any potential issues regarding conflicts of interest or scientific integrity for their projects. This may overlap with issues addressed in the data management plan, but most issues around the ethical handling of data should be covered in the data management plan. In developing this statement, it may be useful to refer to the [APSA Ethics Guide](#) and [Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research](#).

Applicants with projects involving human subjects must provide documentation indicating that they have applied for or already gained IRB approval or exemption for their research plan (for example, the letter of approval or exemption from the IRB or a letter or email confirming submission of an application to the IRB). Applicants who submit documentation of having applied for IRB approval will be asked to submit verification of IRB approval upon receipt of such approval.