

Inequities in abortion access

2022 Request for proposals

Context

Access to abortion care in the US has never been equitable and the threat of even greater inequity looms. On December 10, 2021, [the Supreme Court allowed Texas SB 8](#) to stay in effect, in practice restricting abortion before many even know they are pregnant and opening the door for copycat legislation in other states. In June 2022, the Supreme Court is expected to decide on [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization](#), a case that directly challenges Roe v. Wade and could ban abortion partially or completely in more than half of states. While the outcome of this case is not known, the likelihood for seismic changes in the legal landscape is clear. These legal and policy stressors are layered on top of existing systemic barriers to abortion care that fall the hardest on people of color, people who have difficulty making ends meet, and other people experiencing structural oppression.

As we await the verdict from the Supreme Court, now is an opportune time to ready researchers to document the impact of these seismic changes on people whose access to abortion is constrained by systems of oppression. By centering specific populations, research can direct future work at the local, state, and federal levels where it is most needed. In an effort to generate this evidence, the Society of Family Planning Research Fund (the Society) is offering the [Inequities in abortion access](#) request for proposals (RFP). The deadline for proposals is April 4, 2022. Awards will be announced in late April 2022 and funds will be available for immediate use.



Research focus

The Society invites proposals focused on the question of “How do changes in the US legal abortion landscape impact people whose access to abortion is constrained by systems of oppression?”

Central to this funding opportunity is the understanding that there are many different components of abortion access (eg, cost, acceptability, proximity to abortion provider, timeliness, privacy, social and/or emotional support) and that systems of oppression (eg, racism, classism, heterosexism, nationalism) constrain such access for specific populations. Likewise, proposals must clearly articulate and justify how access is conceptualized within the context of the proposed research and define and justify why research focused on the specific study population is needed.

Additionally, we encourage proposals to consider “unbundling” components of the abortion experience that may be currently provided together (eg, pregnancy confirmation, pain management, financial and logistical support, assessment of abortion completion), recognizing the potential for abortion care to become a more fragmented experience for some in the future.

Proposed research must be positioned to [generate empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes](#) in clinical practice, public policy, or health service delivery. We encourage researchers to give thought to how the proposed project is and/or will be responsive to the different potential outcomes of the Supreme Court decision. Teams should also be attentive to the Society’s [diversity, equity, and inclusion vision statement](#) and how they can be part of bringing that vision to life in their work.

Funds and duration

The Society invites proposals for research studies with budgets up to \$50,000 that can be completed within 18 months of award. We anticipate supporting up to six research projects via this funding opportunity.



Additional benefits

In addition to receiving funds for research, the principal investigator (PI) and up to two other members of the study team will join a learning community of peers supported by this funding opportunity, as well as others conducting related research. The learning community, facilitated by Society staff, will provide a space for discussion designed to strengthen research underway and elevate each other’s thinking. The learning community will also provide an important container for honing research, as needed, in response to potential changes to the legal landscape after the Supreme Court decision.

Application submission opens on **January 31, 2022** and closes **April 4, 2022.**

Eligibility

Grants will be made to organizations on behalf of a named PI. Grants are limited, without exception, to tax-exempt organizations. Applicants do not need to be members of the Society of Family Planning. Funding is limited to projects studying US populations.

Review process

All proposals will undergo peer review using [specific criteria](#). The goal of peer review is to make recommendations for enhancing the research proposal and to identify the projects with the greatest potential impact. The funder will also be involved in the selection of grants; this ensures that the research funded through the Society is one of many strategic components working together to strengthen the family planning sector. All proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria:

Impact (25%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are positioned to generate empirical evidence with a clear and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, public policy, or health services delivery.

Methods (25%)

The Society seeks to fund methodologically sound and rigorous projects.

Study population (15%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that focus on study populations whose abortion access is constrained by systems of oppression and that are aligned with the proposed research questions.

Relevance (15%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are responsive to potential changes to the US legal abortion landscape.

Team (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects where the team composition is an asset to the project, including teams that bring together individuals with diverse skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives. The Society also prioritizes study teams that leverage the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.

Budget (5%)

The Society seeks to fund projects with budgets that are fully justified and appropriate in relation to the proposed project.

Timeline (5%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are feasible to complete within 18 months of receiving the award.

Proposal instructions

1. Online application form:

Includes contact and demographic information for the PI, institution, and parties responsible for accounts payable and grants management if the project is funded.

2. Summary (250 words):

Provide a brief summary of the proposed project. This information may be used in our newsletter, website, and other educational and promotional purposes should the application be funded.

3. Study team:

List key team members, including contact and demographic information.

4. Proposal narrative (7 to 9 pages):

a. Background: Describe the issue and justify how the proposed research project will generate data that will produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, public policy, or health services delivery now and in the future.

b. Research question(s): Include the question(s) that will be answered through the proposed project. Describe how you are conceptualizing abortion access and how that is similar to or different from other existing approaches to capturing access. Please also describe to which aspects of the abortion experience you are applying your framework of access.

c. Methods: Describe the research methods that will be used to answer the research question(s) at hand.

d. Study population: Describe the specific study population. The study population must align with the research question(s) and be specifically defined and justified. Sample size should be based on power calculations or other appropriate methods as determined by the study approach; sample size should account for subgroup analyses as appropriate.

e. Timeline: Describe the timeline for conducting research activities. Data collection and analysis must be feasible to complete within 18 months of receiving the award.

f. Legal landscape: Describe how the proposed project is and/or will be responsive to the different potential outcomes of the Supreme Court decision.

g. Use of research results: Narrate the target audience(s) with whom you plan to share your research findings, the actions you would like them to take in response to your findings, and the desired outcomes.

h. Next phase of research: Concisely forecast what results of the proposed study would necessitate additional research investment and what results would suggest further research is not needed. For a scenario where additional investment is needed, briefly describe what that investment might look like in terms of study design and potential significance.

i. Team composition: Team composition must be an asset to the project, including teams that bring together individuals with diverse skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives relevant to the proposed project. Elaborate on the expertise and skills of the individuals composing your study team. Describe the positionality (eg, the social and political context that creates your identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status) of the team and its effect on the proposed project's design, feasibility, and impact. Note that the Society prioritizes study teams that leverage the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.

j. References: Works cited should be listed as an appendix to the proposal; the reference page is not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

Proposal instructions, continued

5. Budget and budget narrative:

Studies should be \$50,000 or less. The budget narrative must provide sufficient detail to assess feasibility and suitability in the peer review process and must justify the relevance of requested resources to the project's success. Combining additional secured funds with requested funds for the proposed project is permissible, but additional funds must be named clearly in the budget, if applicable. Direct project costs include personnel, research expenses (eg, equipment, supplies, travel, materials), activities related to use of research results, and other related costs. Indirect costs are permitted at no more than 20% of total direct costs. For subcontracts and sub-awards, the budget itself may include the 20% indirect cost charges, but the subcontract total may not be included in the main budget when calculating the overall indirect cost charges. Budget documents should be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

6. Study team:

NIH-style biosketches are encouraged for all established scientists. Professional résumés are encouraged for those whose careers have not focused on research. Team members can submit the format that works best for the individuals on the team; however, each submitted biosketch or resume should not exceed 10 pages in length. These documents must be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

7. Tax-exempt status:

Proof of the agency/institution's tax-exempt status determination letter must be included as an appendix and is not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative. Documentation should also be included for subcontracts with tax-exempt organizations that exceed 20% of the budget. These documents must be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

Required formatting: Font size must be at least 11 points and 1.5 line spacing must be used. Please upload as a single PDF file. All grant applications must be submitted electronically through the [online application portal](#).

The Society welcomes the opportunity to provide clarification around or assistance with any components of the application. Please contact Grants@SocietyFP.org.

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