

# Exploring patterns of LARC use through mixed methods research

## 2024 Request for proposals

### Purpose

Long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) are important tools for some people desiring to manage their fertility. At the same time, there is a long history of coercive practices around contraception in general and LARCs specifically, especially among those whose fertility is problematized within existing systems of oppression. Given this, it is critical to center the needs, preferences, and values of people using LARCs in order to uphold people's reproductive autonomy.

Mixed methods research on patterns of LARC use can be used in service of this goal, bringing together quantitative data with qualitative data to shed light on how patterns of use align with people's needs, preferences, and values. To date, much of the discourse around patterns of use has focused around the method (eg, effectiveness window), rather than the people using it. As such, the Society of Family Planning is offering the *Exploring patterns of LARC use through mixed methods research* funding opportunity. The purpose of this funding opportunity is to generate mixed methods research on patterns of LARC use that can be used to inform person-centered contraceptive care.

The deadline for proposals is October 15 at 8:59 pm PT/11:59 pm ET. Awards will be announced in November 2024 and funds will be available for immediate use.



## Research focus

We invite proposals that utilize mixed methods research to describe patterns of LARC use among people in the US, with specific attention to desired duration of use. We hope that research supported through this funding opportunity will expand the evidence base around LARC use in a way that centers people using LARCs. As such, because quantitative measures of use may not be reflective of desired use, proposals should leverage qualitative methods to bring nuance to these data, exploring topics such as but not limited to: alignment between duration of use and needs, preferences, and values; ability to get method when desired; and reasons for or barriers to removal.

Proposed research can focus on one or more than one LARC method, so long as the specific method(s) is clearly named and justified in the proposal. Please note that priority will be given to proposals focused on LARCs that typically require clinician support to discontinue. In addition, given the history of coercive practices around LARCs, teams must specifically define and justify the population the research is focused on, bringing attention to how social location (eg, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, age, health, and geography) shapes that population's experience with LARCs and why it is important to explore this particular topic among that population.

Proposed research must be positioned to produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, and/or other structures that support person-centered contraceptive care. We encourage proposals to be as specific as possible in describing the path from research to change, recognizing that change may be differently defined in each project. Please note that proposals focused on increasing LARC uptake are not aligned with the goals of this funding opportunity.

Teams must be attentive to the Society's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Vision Statement](#) and should seek to uphold [equity-informed principles for contraceptive access research](#) throughout the research process. If proposed research uses quantitative data related to race and racism, please be attentive to [recommendations](#) for working with these data.



## Funds and duration

We invite proposals for research studies with budgets up to \$125,000 that can be completed within 18 months of award. We anticipate supporting up to three research projects via this funding opportunity. Funding is also available to cover processing fees associated with two open-access publications, provided the work is published within two years of grant completion.

## Eligibility

Grants will be made to organizations on behalf of a named principal investigator (PI). Grants are limited, without exception, to tax-exempt organizations. Applicants do not need to be members of the Society. Funding is limited to projects focused on patterns of LARC use in the US.

## 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 of these awards may also be involved in the selection of grants; this helps ensure that the research funded through the Society is one of many strategic components working together to strengthen the family planning sector.

Application submission opens on

**August 12, 2024** and closes **October 15, 2024**



## Review process (continued)

All proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria. For more information about the review process, please see the [proposal review guide: https://bit.ly/3SAd1kX](https://bit.ly/3SAd1kX)

### Methods (45%)

The Society seeks to fund methodologically sound and rigorous projects that use mixed methods research approaches.

### Impact (25%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are positioned to produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, and/or other structures that support person-centered contraceptive care.

### Equity (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are informed by the [equity principles](#) developed by the [Coalition to Expand Contraceptive Access](#).

### Study population (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that include a clear justification for a specific population focus and a thoughtful explanation of the social factors that shape that population's experience with LARCs.

### 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 elevate the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.

### Additional review considerations (not scored)

Reviewers are also asked to provide feedback on the reasonableness of the proposed budget and period of support; however, these factors are not scored.



## Proposal instructions

### 1. Online application form:

Includes contact and demographic information for the PI, and contact information for the institution, study team, and parties responsible for accounts payable and grants management if the project is funded. The [application form is linked here](#), and on page 7.

### 2. Summary (250 words):

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

### 3. Proposal narrative (8-10 pages):

All proposals should include:

**Background:** Describe the issue and justify how the proposed research project will produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, and/or other structures that support person-centered contraceptive care.

**Research question(s):** Include the question(s) that will be answered through the proposed project.

**Methods:** Describe the quantitative and qualitative research methods that will be used to answer the research question(s). Please clearly name and justify the mixed methods approach (eg, convergent parallel design, explanatory sequential design, exploratory sequential design, embedded design, multiphase design).

**Study population:** Describe the specific study population. The study population must align with the research question(s) and be specifically defined and justified with attention to the social factors shaping that population's experience with LARCs. 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.

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

**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 how 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 shapes the proposed project's design, feasibility, and impact. Please refer to these [recommendations](#) for information about positionality. Note that the Society prioritizes study teams that elevate the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.



## Proposal instructions (continued)

**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.

**Equity principles:** Describe your plans for upholding [equity-informed principles](#) throughout the research project.

**References:** Works cited should be listed as an appendix to the proposal; reference page is not included in the 8-10 pages of the proposal narrative.

### 4. Budget and budget narrative:

Studies should be \$125,000 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. Additional secured or requested funds for the proposed project must be named, 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 8-10 pages of the proposal narrative.

### 5. Team information:

NIH-style biosketches are encouraged for all established scientists. Professional resumes 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 8-10 pages of the proposal narrative.

### 6. 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 8-10 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 8-10 pages of the proposal narrative.



## Required formatting


Please use a font size that is at least 11 points and 1.5 line spacing. Upload all materials as a single PDF file. All proposals must be submitted electronically through the [online application portal](#).

## Submission deadline

The deadline for proposals is October 15, 2024 at 8:59 pm PT/11:59 pm ET. Awards will be announced in November 2024 and funds will be available for immediate use.

## Questions

The Society welcomes the opportunity to provide clarification around or assistance with any components of the application. Please contact [Grants@SocietyFP.org](mailto:Grants@SocietyFP.org).



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