**BUDGET GUIDELINES FOR PIPELINE GRANTS**

A budget is not required at the time of submission. The budget will be finalized with the grantee, their university's research office, and RSF after the approval of the grant.

**Budget Format and Maximum Amount**
Budgets are limited to $35,000 for individuals or $50,000 for teams of eligible assistant professors and should use the Pipeline Budget Template (link).

**Project Length**
Projects are limited to one year.

**Indirect Costs**
No indirect costs are allowed.

**Subcontracts**
When projects include work subcontracted to another university or research organization, a detailed budget and budget justification for each line item in the subcontract must also be submitted as part of the main proposal and budget template.

**PI Salary Support/Course Buyouts**
PI/co-PI salary support is limited to $15,000 per eligible PI (not including fringe benefits). Course buyouts are allowed but count towards the salary support limit.

Full professors, associate professors, and assistant professors who have previously received RSF funding are eligible to be co-PIs on projects but cannot receive funding.

**Student Research Assistant**
RSF supports salary/wages for research assistance time for undergraduate and graduate students. PIs must indicate how RA time is calculated (e.g., hourly wage by number of hours; salary by percent of time devoted to project). RSF pays RA fringe benefits but does not pay student fees or tuition remission (in some cases, student health insurance fees are allowed).

At a minimum, the compensation for research assistants must be based on the minimum wage in the state where the fiscal agent for the grant is located or at least $15.00 per hour, whichever is higher.

**Fringe Benefits**
RSF pays fringe benefits where required up to a maximum rate of 40%.

**Consultants**
The core research team should have all necessary skills to conduct the project. However, if the PIs require the special skills of an outside consultant, the budget justification must specify the expertise the consultant brings to the proposed project which is lacking among the other PIs.
The budget justification should provide the consultant’s rate and time commitment to the project. The maximum allowable payment for consultants whose services can be justified is $750 for an 8-hour day. RSF does not pay fringe benefits on consultant fees. Only consultants whose salary is $250,000 or less are eligible to request support. Any exceptions to the salary and rate caps will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The total fees for an individual consultant cannot exceed $7,500.

**Survey Fees**

If data collection will be performed by a survey firm, please obtain a quote from at least two firms, including information about the firm’s participant compensation structure (see “Study Participant Compensation” for additional requirements). The budget narrative should include a discussion of the two quotes and justify the decision to use one of the firms—there is no requirement that the applicant engage the firm with the lowest quote if there is a good reason for choosing the higher quote.

**Study Participant Incentives**

When grant funds are used to compensate study participants, applicants must fully describe the compensation plan as well as the reasoning behind the amount, method, and terms of compensation. If a survey firm has been hired to collect the data, applicants must obtain information from the firm about their participant compensation structure. RSF requires that payments to study participants (including for crowdsourced workers) be based on the minimum wage in the state where the grantee organization is located or at least $15 per hour, whichever is higher. Justified alternate compensation structures will be considered in exceptional circumstances.

**Travel**

RSF will consider travel expenses directly related to carrying out the research project (e.g. data collection, site visits or access to restricted data). If the approved budget contains funds for travel, RSF funds should be used only for economy class travel and moderately priced restaurants and hotels.

Conference travel is allowed and limited to $3,000 per eligible PI.

**Equipment**

RSF will consider limited requests for equipment, such as computers or software, on a case-by-case basis. In no case can more than $5,000 be spent on equipment.

**Data Access Fees**

RSF may provide limited funding for access to restricted or proprietary data on a case-by-case basis. If the applicants on a project are faculty members or researchers at a university or research organization that is a member of a restricted data center (such as a Federal Statistics RDC), RSF will not typically provide any payment to the center. However, if the center has a formal policy of charging a reduced fee to all members rather than waiving the fee, the applicant must include a letter with their proposal to RSF from the director of the center that explains the fee structure for members and non-members.

If the budget includes fees to access/work with restricted data at a Research Data Center (RDC) or non/governmental facility, the budget narrative must include a breakdown of the fees, including the amount of time required at the RDC to carry out the project and any additional fees that may be
associated with the specific dataset the PI(S) wish to access. RSF is a member of the New York RDC (NYRDC), which allows researchers to access restricted-use microdata in physically secure facilities at Cornell University, Yale University, and Baruch College, three of twenty-four Census Research Data Centers across the nation. RSF-supported scholars may use one of the three affiliated sites without paying an access fee if their projects are approved through the NYRDC’S normal application process for conducting research at the sites.

**Funds from other organizations**
Co-funding and/or cost-sharing by the grantee university or organization is encouraged and should be reported in the budget narrative. This includes approved or pending funding. Requested RSF funds must be allocated to budget items that are not covered by other funders.

**Unallowable expenses**
RSF does not provide funds for any of the following expenses:
- Rent or other payments for office space.
- Sabbaticals or fellowships at other institutions, even if the PI will be working on an RSF project.
- Tuition remission for graduate or undergraduate students.
- Travel for collaboration purposes (meetings among PIs/collaborators)
- Generic costs, such as copying, printing, mailing, phone calls, office supplies, information/computer services, etc., as these are typically considered to be a part of indirect costs.