

MEMORANDUM

TO: IUP Researchers
FR: Tracy Eisenhower, IUP Research Institute
DA: April 15, 2013
RE: 2014 Center for Rural PA Funding Opportunities



I am pleased to be able to announce and share with you the 2014 RFP for the Center for Rural PA.

As of last week, they were still uncertain of funding availability so this is definitely good news!

The full RFP follows, but here are some important facts:

1. Deadline for REQUIRED Letter of Intent: **May 17, 2013**
2. Research grant program maximum is \$50,000
3. Research Grant Program Targeted Topics:
 - a. Fiscal Status of Rural Volunteer Fire Companies
 - b. Status of Municipally-owned rural roadways
 - c. Economic Impact of PA Designated Heritage Areas
 - d. Open Topics
4. Mini Grant Program maximum is \$15,000
5. Mini Grant Targeted Topics:
 - a. Analysis of PA Health Workforce reports
 - b. Analysis of Special Education Funding in Rural and Urban School Districts
 - c. Analysis of Unearned Income in Rural PA
 - d. Analysis of Self-Employed
 - e. Analysis of Municipal Earned Income Tax Revenues
 - f. Status of United Way Fundraising in PA
 - g. Status of Rural PA Acute Care Hospitals
 - h. Rural Communities and the Needs of Older Residents
 - i. Open Topics

Tenure/Tenure-Track faculty are eligible to apply. If you are interested in applying, please contact me directly.

Thanks!

Tracy

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2014 RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Center for
Rural Pennsylvania
A Legislative Agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly

625 Forster Street, Room 902, Harrisburg, PA 17120
Phone (717) 787-9555 Fax (717) 772-3587 www.rural.palegislature.us

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The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative agency that serves as a resource for rural policy research within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. It was created in 1987 under Act 16, the Rural Revitalization Act, to promote and sustain the vitality of Pennsylvania's rural and small communities.

THE CENTER FOR RURAL PENNSYLVANIA 2014 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative agency that serves as a resource for rural policy research within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The Center's mission is to promote and sustain the vitality of the state's rural and small communities by:

- administering grants to conduct research on matters relating to rural conditions;
- maintaining and disseminating a broad base of information on rural trends and conditions;
- publishing research and project results; and
- sponsoring regional and statewide forums on rural issues.

As part of the Center's yearly Research Grant Program, the Board of Directors approves topics for research projects. All projects must show a clear relationship to one or more of the Center's mandated research areas, which are:

- rural people and communities;
- economic development;
- local government finance and administration;
- community services;
- natural resources and the environment;
- rural values and social change;
- educational outreach;
- agriculture; and
- health and welfare concerns.

Eligibility

The Center's enabling legislation requires that Center grants be awarded to qualified faculty members of Pennsylvania State University, the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) universities, or the regional campuses of the University of Pittsburgh. A qualified faculty member must serve as the project director. Partnerships with other academic institutions, community organizations, and public and private agencies are encouraged.

Research Grant Program

One-year grants are awarded to conduct applied policy research or to identify local strategies that can result in legislative or program policy considerations or recommendations. For the 2014 grant cycle, the maximum allowable grant award is \$50,000 per project.

Targeted Topics

This year the Board of Directors has approved three targeted topics. The list of topics begins on Page 6.

Open Topics

Other reasonable and beneficial projects that address one or more of the Center's mandated research areas (see above) will be considered by the Center under the Open Topics category.

Mini Grant Program

Mini Grants are awarded to projects that focus on basic data collection and analysis, time-sensitive issues, and/or the preparation of reference materials. Projects supported as Mini Grants are a maximum of nine months in duration and are eligible for a maximum of \$15,000 in Center support.

Targeted Topics

This year the Board of Directors has approved eight Mini Grant topics. The list of topics begins on Page 7.

Open Topics

Open topics will also be accepted for Mini Grants.

Grant Application Process

The Center's 2014 Research Grant Program application process is as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Request for Proposals released. | April 2013 |
| 2. Deadline for submission of Letters of Intent. | May 17, 2013 |
| 3. Letters of Intent are reviewed and selected applicants are invited to submit a full proposal. | June-July 2013 |
| 4. Proposal planning discussions are conducted with applicants. | July-August 2013 |
| 5. Deadline for full proposal submission. | September 6, 2013 |
| 6. Center's Board of Directors selects projects for funding. | December 2013 |
| 7. Final work plans are negotiated and accepted. | December 2013 |
| 8. Cooperative Agreements are issued and work begins. | January 2014 |

Letters of Intent

As the first step in the grant application process, researchers must submit a Letter of Intent. No full proposal will be accepted without the submission, and Board approval, of a Letter of Intent. Each letter is reviewed to determine its potential for supporting the Center's research mandate. Applicants meeting that benchmark will be invited to prepare and submit a full grant proposal. The Letter of Intent process is the same for both the traditional Research Grant Program and the Mini Grant Program. Those applicants whose Letters of Intent are approved for full proposal submission will receive additional information and instructions on full proposal preparation, submission and review procedures.

A Letter of Intent must include the cover sheet and is limited to three additional typewritten pages.

The Letter of Intent narrative must include the following:

- project description;
- scope of work to be undertaken;
- anticipated policy implications (for full research projects only); and
- identification of partners and/or subcontractors.

Letters of Intent must be received in the Center for Rural Pennsylvania office, either in hard copy, via email or fax, by the close of business (4:30 p.m.) on Friday, May 17, 2013.

Letter of Intent Submission Guidelines

Hard Copy

Submit the original Letter of Intent and **four** copies to:

Mary Kandray Gelenser
Program Manager for Grants
Center for Rural Pennsylvania
625 Forster St., Room 902
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Receipt of a Letter of Intent will be acknowledged via email. If acknowledgement is not received in three business days from the date of mailing, please call (717) 787-9555 to follow up.

Email

1. Download the cover sheet from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania website at www.rural.palegislature.us and email the completed cover sheet and the text of the Letter of Intent to Mary Kandray Gelenser at: gelensermk@rural.palegislature.us.
2. An emailed Letter of Intent must be submitted in **Microsoft Word**. A Letter of Intent submitted in another format will not be accepted.
3. The acceptance of an emailed Letter of Intent will be acknowledged via return email. If the receipt of an emailed Letter of Intent has not been acknowledged within three business days of its submission, please call to check its status.

Fax

A Letter of Intent may also be faxed to Mary Kandray Gelenser at (717) 772-3587. Please follow up fax submissions with a telephone call to confirm that the fax has been received and is readable.

All Letters of Intent must be received at the office of the Center for Rural Pennsylvania no later than the close of business (4:30 p.m.) on Friday, May 17, 2013.

TARGETED TOPICS FOR THE 2014 GRANT PROGRAM

Fiscal Status of Rural Volunteer Fire Companies

This study will identify and analyze revenues and expenditures for rural fire companies to assess the financial capacity of these companies to respond to community needs. The study will also examine the financial impact of fire company mergers to determine any cost savings and/or operating efficiencies that may have been realized by combining fire companies.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Identification of revenue sources and trends for rural and urban volunteer fire companies.
- Determination of the financial capacity of volunteer fire companies to respond to community needs.
- Examination of the finances of recently merged fire companies to determine whether or not the merger has been financially beneficial.
- Public policy implications and relevant recommendations.

Status of Municipally-Owned Rural Roadways

Rural municipalities maintain 42,000 miles of Pennsylvania roads and streets. In 2010, municipalities in Pennsylvania used an average of 35 percent of their budgets for road and street construction and maintenance. This research will analyze rural municipal capacities to construct and maintain their roads, streets and highways.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of rural municipal budgets to determine funding (including Liquid Fuel Taxes, Act 13 and any private sector) and expenditure trends in road construction and maintenance for the last five years.
- Projection of the need for municipal road construction and maintenance in the next five years and associated costs.
- Public policy implications and relevant recommendations.

Economic Impact of Pennsylvania Designated Heritage Areas

For decades, Pennsylvania's state and federal heritage areas have showcased local historic, recreational, natural and scenic resources that exemplify the heritage of Pennsylvania. This project will provide an estimation of the number of visitors and their spending habits in Pennsylvania's heritage areas to measure economic impacts.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Estimation of the number of visitors and their expenditures in a sample of Pennsylvania's state and federally designated heritage areas.
- Estimation of the types of visits (overnight, day, group, etc.) to the sampled heritage areas.
- Determination of the direct and indirect sales, income and employment that result from visits to heritage areas.
- Public policy implications and relevant recommendations.

OPEN TOPICS FOR THE 2014 RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

In addition to the targeted topics listed above, other reasonable and potentially beneficial projects will be considered by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania under the Open Topics category. Proposed projects for this category must show a clear relationship to one or more of the Center's mandated research areas listed on Page 3. Application procedures for proposed open topic projects must follow the Letter of Intent guidelines listed on Page 4. Open topic projects must define specific key outcomes and specific policy implications that will benefit communities in rural Pennsylvania.

MINI GRANT TOPICS FOR THE 2014 RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM

Analysis of Pennsylvania Health Workforce Reports

In support of the Pennsylvania State Health Improvement Plan, data is collected on nurses, dentists, dental hygienists, physicians, and physician assistants in Pennsylvania, including demographics, work sector and specialties, use of information technology, and other information. This study will analyze the most recent data for active nurses, dentists, dental hygienists, physicians, and physician assistants and provide rural/urban comparisons.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of the demographic characteristics of healthcare providers including their years of service in the field and future practice plans.
- Analysis of the primary and secondary specialty areas of providers in Pennsylvania.
- Analysis of other relevant data concerning healthcare delivery factors in Pennsylvania.

Analysis of Special Education Funding in Rural and Urban School Districts

Rural school districts spend 12 percent of their budgets to support special education. This study will analyze secondary data on the number of special education students and school district special education expenditures over the past 10 years for rural and urban school districts.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of the number of special education students in rural and urban schools as a percentage of total enrollment, and identification of the types of student special education needs.
- Analysis of school district special education spending including identification of the sources of funding to support special education services.
- Trend analysis of special education funding in rural and urban Pennsylvania school districts.

Analysis of Unearned Income in Rural Pennsylvania

Unearned income is defined as government transfer payments (Social Security payments, unemployment compensation, Medicare payments, etc.), interest, dividends and rent. In 1970, 24 percent of all rural income came from unearned sources. Forty years later, more than 41 percent of rural income came from unearned sources. This study will analyze changes in unearned income and identify the potential impact on overall community characteristics.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of the changes in earned income in rural and urban Pennsylvania and the U.S. over the past 10 years.
- Comparisons of the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of rural and urban counties with varying percentages of unearned income.
- Statistical analysis of the relationship of unearned income to key economic indicators including, but not limited to, unemployment, wages and salaries, and the number of business establishments.

Analysis of Self-Employed

More than 375,000 rural Pennsylvanians are self employed in industries ranging from farm operators to computer consultants. Using secondary data, this study will analyze data on rural and urban self-employed, determine numbers by industry, socio-economic characteristics, and changes in self-employment over the past 10 years.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of the number of self-employed by industry in rural and urban Pennsylvania.
- Analysis of the socio-demographic characteristics and income of the self employed in rural and urban Pennsylvania.
- Analysis of the change in the number and type of self employed Pennsylvanians over the past 10 years.

Analysis of Municipal Earned Income Tax Revenues

In 2010, 48 percent of rural municipal tax revenues came from the Earned Income Tax (EIT). Using secondary data, this study will analyze EIT revenues and develop projections for what rural municipalities will likely collect in the future.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analysis of the change in EIT collections in rural and urban municipalities over the past 10 years.
- Estimation of the collection of EIT, at current tax rates, over the next 10 years in rural and urban municipalities.

Status of United Way Fundraising in Pennsylvania

For more than 100 years, the United Way has raised money to meet needs in communities across Pennsylvania. These efforts have been underwritten by annual community fundraising campaigns. This study will evaluate the success of these campaigns throughout rural and urban Pennsylvania over the past 10 years.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Identification of local United Way organizations in Pennsylvania in terms of the populations they serve and the general services they provide.
- Analysis of rural and urban Pennsylvania United Way organization fundraising goals and success over the past 10 years in relation to community socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

Status of Rural Pennsylvania Acute Care Hospitals

Some rural Pennsylvania acute care hospitals are struggling to remain viable. This study will analyze the various statuses of acute care rural hospitals for continued sustainability.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Analyze the organizational structure of rural acute care hospitals and identify any recent organizational changes that have been undertaken or under consideration for the sustainability of these healthcare centers (mergers, affiliation with health care systems, etc.)
- Identification of examples and case studies of rural acute care hospitals that have undergone organizational or structural changes that could serve as models of viability for rural Pennsylvania acute care hospitals.

Rural Communities and the Needs of Older Residents

In 2010, 17 percent of Pennsylvania's rural population was 65 years old and older; by 2030, the percentage will increase to 25 percent. Rural communities should look for ways to prepare for this significant population shift. This study will identify existing research, programs and models on how communities have addressed the needs of older residents and compile these into a guide or handbook.

Key Expected Outcomes:

- Review of successful strategies and programs that rural communities, both within and outside of Pennsylvania, are using to address the needs of an aging populace.
- Develop a user friendly handbook for rural governments and nonprofits that provides guidance, resources and examples to assist communities in implementing strategies that benefit their aging citizens.

OPEN TOPICS FOR THE 2014 MINI GRANT PROGRAM

Open Topics will also be accepted for the Mini Grant Program. Proposed Mini Grant topics for this category should focus on basic data collection and analysis, time-sensitive issues and/or the preparation of reference materials. Mini Grant projects are to be a maximum of nine months in duration. Proposed Mini Grant projects must show a clear relationship to one or more of the Center's mandated research areas listed on Page 3. Application procedures for proposed open Mini Grant projects must follow the Letter of Intent guidelines listed on Page 4.



Rural Pennsylvania

A Legislative Agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly

2014 Letter of Intent Cover Sheet

Project Title: _____

Project Director Name: _____

Host University: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Targeted Topic – List RFP Topic Addressed: _____

Open Topic – Indicate Subject Area Addressed By Selecting One Of The Areas Listed Below:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural People and Communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government Finance and Administration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resources and Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Outreach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Values and Social Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Welfare Concerns |

Synopsis of Project: _____

(50 word maximum) _____

2014 Estimated Budget:

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| _____ | Center for Rural Pennsylvania Funding |
| _____ | Other (Cash/In-kind) |
| _____ | 2014 Budget Total |

Project Duration: Nine Months (Mini Grant) One Year Two Years Three Years

Identified Partners or Subcontractors: _____

Project Director Signature: _____

Date: _____



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