



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Transformative research on minimum wage policies

ISSUED: November 3, 2015

DUE: March 31, 2016, at 5 p.m. CDT

Many communities across the country have recently passed, or are considering, increases to the minimum wage in an effort to provide greater financial stability for workers. However, the existing research on minimum wage policy does not include a comprehensive evaluation of how the minimum wage impacts workers and communities. As part of its commitment to ensuring that public policies are rooted in data and evidence, the Laura and John Arnold Foundation (LJAF) is seeking to fund pioneering research projects that study the effect of state and local minimum wage policy changes on economic opportunity, mobility, and household well-being. Research projects should highlight the impact that minimum wage policy has on individuals, employers, governments, and the economy. They should specifically explain the ways in which employers adapt to minimum wage increases and the implications of those changes for workers. In addition, studies should extend beyond sole assessments of employment outcomes and should illuminate the broader ramifications of minimum wage policy changes.

The most competitive projects will include the following components:

- Evaluations of city level minimum wage policy changes that leverage high-quality administrative data or other high resolution datasets;
- Studies that leverage new or unique data to answer meaningful policy questions, or the development of new datasets that will be made publicly available and will be valuable for future research on minimum wage policies;
- Original research—rather than critiques of previous research or methodologies—that substantially improves understanding of key, policy-relevant questions; and,
- Research with the potential to significantly advance the national policy discussion that includes a high degree of external validity and that identifies the underlying mechanisms driving the outcomes of a higher minimum wage.

LJAF currently supports several high-impact research projects focused on minimum wage policy, including projects evaluating minimum wage increases in Seattle, Chicago, and Los Angeles; a project using administrative population-level data from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to study the impact of higher minimum wages on Earned Income Tax Credit benefits; and a project assessing the broad effects of minimum wage policies on poverty. Some of these projects will be discussed in more detail during a symposium that will be held from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Jan. 5 at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square Hotel. The [symposium](#), “*Addressing Economic Opportunity: The Minimum Wage and Other Policy Tools for State and Local Government*,” will include a discussion on innovative approaches to evaluating minimum wage policy and promising policies that state and local governments can use to solve pressing challenges such as economic opportunity and household well-being.



Those interested in learning more about LJAF's support for minimum wage research projects are encouraged to attend.

Submissions

Applicants should submit a research proposal by **March 31, 2016, at 5 p.m. CDT** to MinWageRFP@arnoldfoundation.org.

All proposals should include the following sections and should not exceed 10 pages (inclusive of the sections listed below, appendices, and exhibits):

- A half-page abstract;
- A concise summary of the motivation for the project, a description of how the proposed work transcends the current debate, and its importance for public policy;
- A brief review of relevant literature and a clear statement that explains how the proposed work will provide a meaningful and innovative contribution to both academic literature and the evidence base for policymakers (please specifically address how policymakers would be able to use the results of your work);
- A detailed description of research design and methods, which follow LJAF's [Guidelines for Investments in Research](#);
- A project budget and timeline including dates for key milestones, deliverables, and completion; and
- Vita(e) of the researchers.

Selection

All submitted research proposals will be evaluated by an Advisory Panel. This panel includes David Autor (MIT), Hilary Hoynes (Berkeley), David Neumark (UC Irvine), and Emmanuel Saez (Berkeley). Selected proposals will be transformative, will fundamentally improve our understanding of key minimum wage policy questions, and will have broad implications for policy across the country. In addition, selected proposals will bring an innovative and fresh approach to the evaluation of minimum wage policies.

Selected projects will be presented and discussed at annual conferences scheduled during the early, mid, and final stages of the work.

About the Laura and John Arnold Foundation

The Laura and John Arnold Foundation is working to address our nation's most pressing and persistent challenges using evidence-based, multi-disciplinary approaches. Its strategic investments are currently focused in criminal justice, education, evidence-based policy and innovation, public accountability, research integrity, and science and technology. LJAF has offices in Houston, New York City, and Washington, D.C. www.arnoldfoundation.org