



HOW TO APPLY FOR THE AFP WILSON C. “BILL” LEVIS FUNDRAISING RESEARCH GRANT

The AFP Foundation for Philanthropy offers grants to individuals who wish to undertake research projects directly related to fundraising performance. Award amounts are made at the Foundation’s discretion, up to \$50,000. It is presumed that any nonprofit organization involved in a study will be fully aware of the project and will give permission to the researcher to carry out the project. Fundraising professionals who wish to submit proposals are encouraged to seek advice from or partner with academic institutions in developing the research design.

Guidelines:

Each project shall identify objectives that include findings applicable to current fundraising practice that (a) improves overall performance in donor participation and/or fundraising revenues, and (b) adds value to the current body of knowledge by providing applicable, practical information.

For full consideration, a proposal letter will...

1. Define the research need, rationale, goals and objectives.
2. Include a review of the literature related to the proposed research.
3. Describe the research methods to be used.
4. If applicable, estimate the size of the sample to be studied.
5. Outline the anticipated benefits of the study and quantify them if possible
6. Specify the time frame for the project (usually a 6- to 24-month period) and note whether this is part of a larger research project for which funds are being sought from other funders.
7. Indicate the particular project costs that the grant will support and note whether you would be able to conduct this research if awarded partial funding of project costs. [Note: Because grant funds are limited, the Grant Selection Committee has a policy of paying direct costs only.]

8. Include a letter from a cooperating nonprofit organization executive documenting permission of the nonprofit to carry out the project. General letters of endorsement are neither required nor desired.
9. Include the investigator's resume.
10. Show how the project relates to fundraising performance.
11. Include a plan for dissemination of research results.

The researcher should be willing to share research results with AFP members by preparing a complete analysis of the research methods and outcomes for possible publication as an article in *Advancing Philanthropy* and/or in an online publication. Any other publication derived from the research project should note the grant support from the AFP Foundation for Philanthropy. Grant awards are made in two equal payments, the first upon receipt of the grantee's signed letter of agreement, and the second upon receipt of the final written report for the project.

Proposal letters will be reviewed and grants recommended by the AFP Bill Levis Research Grant Selection Committee of the AFP Research Council, which includes representatives from the Fundraising Effectiveness Project.

Inquiries and proposals (all materials combined into a single PDF file) should be sent to: AFP Foundation for Philanthropy via email: foundation@afpglobal.org

Note: Researchers would have access to the Growth in Giving database, which is the world's largest public record of donation activity, and is continuously updated by leading fundraising software thought leaders (in alphabetical order) Bloomerang, DonorPerfect, Keela, and NeonOne. The Growth in Giving Database has more than 264 million donation transactions from more than 28,000 organizations and \$123 billion in donations since 2005. This data contains anonymized donor keys, anonymized organization keys, gift date, gift amount, and NTEE designations.



Ethics Guidelines for Research with Human Subjects

The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) Research Council and the Grants Committee have developed ethics guidelines as a safeguard to promote ethical and responsible treatment of human subjects/participants in research funded by AFP. It is recommended that grantees employed by an institution that has its own ethics guidelines for conducting research use their institution's guidelines in conducting research for AFP. For grantees not employed by an institution that has its own ethical guidelines, use the following guidelines:

Research involving human subjects must be carried out in accordance with accepted ethical standards. When formulating a proposal for research, grantees should ensure that the project is in accordance with best practice regarding ethics. Grant applicants should explicitly discuss these aspects and how you plan to handle them, in your proposal. Issues will include:

- 1) **justification** - that the proposed research will achieve worthwhile objectives, that these objectives could not be achieved without the informed participation of individuals and that there are adequate resources for the successful completion of the research.
- 2) **access to participant(s)** - when considering potential participants it is important to recognize issues of privacy and that individuals have a right to know how their names were selected and why they are being approached.
- 3) **informed consent** - this is a fundamental aspect of any research program and all those who have agreed to be part of any research must be able to do so in an informed way. In all cases, you should take care to ensure that participants are fully informed about the project and have given informed consent freely. Informed consent is a continuous requirement and participants have the right to ask questions about a project at any time during the duration of the project. At any time, participants have the right to withdraw from the project and to agree how the information they have provided will be used or removed from any database.
- 4) **potential harm to participants** - when considering the nature of the research activity, it is important to work through the potential for psychological and physical harm. At the same time, it may be important to consider the type of support that may be necessary to have in place if participants experience harm.
- 5) **participants' rights** - participants have a number of rights that should be recognized. These include, for example, the right:
 - at any time to withdraw from the project and to discuss if no prior agreement is in place the way in which their data may be used
 - to confidentiality and anonymity - this will require from time to time discussion and agreement as to how these rights will be maintained and if they cannot be maintained the fact that the participant(s) know this from the outset and consents to this condition
 - to refuse to answer any particular question - and in the case of tape recording, the right to ask that the tape be turned off

- to ask questions about the study at any time during participation and write to verify accuracy of their contribution
- to be given access to a summary of the findings of the project when the project is concluded
- to know how the data is going to be used, and
- to discuss the question of the ownership of collected data and to reach agreement on issues of copyright

6) **conflicts of interest** - when considering the nature of the project, it is important to consider the potential for conflicts of interest, particularly if the work is to be carried out in the same organization or if it is sponsored in some way. Not only do participants have the right to know if someone or an organization(s) is sponsoring the project, but also the consequences of any conflicts should be made clear so that potential participants can consent to be part of the project in an informed way.

Depending on the nature of the research project, many of the issues outlined above can be covered by providing potential participants with written information regarding the following:

- a. the names of the people responsible for the research project and how they can be contacted
- b. the procedures in which they will be asked to agree to participate
- c. what participants will have to do and how much time will be involved
- d. how the researcher obtained the participant's name
- e. how the information collected in the research project will be used
- f. what will happen to the information collected in the research project when it is obtained
- g. how confidentiality and anonymity, if required, will be protected
- h. what will happen to the data upon completion of the project
- i. the rights of the individuals that take part in the project
- j. disclosure of partners they work with

Compliance with these guidelines, or those of the applicant's institution, should be demonstrated in the proposed research design as well as in the final report submitted to the AFP Research Council.

If your project involves human subjects, please sign this form (or provide a copy of your institution's Internal Review Board (IRB) approval for the project).

Name

- A copy of my institution's IRB approval for the project is attached (if applicable).