

RFP – 2012-13 School Year

Field Experiments on Child and Parent Behavior

The University of Chicago “Living Lab”

Call for Proposals

The Chicago Heights Early Childhood Center (CHECC) is the home to a series of new innovative early childhood programs launched by researchers at The University of Chicago and Harvard University. The CHECC is currently in its third year of operation.

We welcome proposals for individual or multi-investigator research projects to conduct field experiments investigating all issues of child and parent choice and preferences within the “walls” of our early childhood program. We encourage proposals from all areas of social science, including but not limited to, economics, psychology and child development. Several proposals will be selected for implementation at our center under direction of the University of Chicago researchers. The University of Chicago proposes to collaborate and co-author with the research team, providing expert assistance in modifying experiment instructions for the appropriate age level, assisting in obtaining IRB, providing full staff to implement and collect all data for the project, and working together on data analysis/research write-up. Materials and subject payment funding is available; however, research teams are encouraged to include information about additional funding available at their home institution to cost-share.

Key Dates

We accept proposals on a rolling basis. Future proposals will be accepted pending continued funding of the Chicago Heights Early Childhood Center past year 4.

About our Center

Our center is located at two different campuses in Chicago Heights, IL. The center opened its doors in August, 2010. A large amount of data has already been collected on participant families, including demographic information, child behavior surveys, and others. The subject pool includes over 2,000 families who have been randomized to different treatment groups, including a control group. The CHECC Preschool+Parent Involvement arm provides over 200 students with a half-day of comprehensive preschool instruction and provides parents with hands-on interaction in the classroom. Children attend school for either 3 months, 9 months or 12 months of the year. Therefore, we can conduct experiments year-round. The CHECC Parent Academy program is designed to provide 200 parents of children ages 3, 4 and 5 with knowledge about how to foster an environment for academic success for their children. At this time, our ‘oldest’ participants are in 1st grade.

Ongoing/Past Research

Several different research studies have already been funded and implemented in Years 1 and 2, including a study of intergenerational transfer of time and risk preference, a study of parent cheating behavior, a study of parent and child pro-social behaviors and modeling, a study of gender differences in competitiveness, a study of warm glow versus altruism, a study of goal setting and impact on the “go-no-go” task, and a study of the impact of parent’s confidence on child development. We also have some opportunities to conduct research with older children, and have investigated differences in behavior among 3-5 year-olds relative to their 6-14 year old siblings.

Research Proposal Guide

We accept concise, and somewhat informal, research proposals (not to exceed 5 pages in 12pt font for the entire proposal, excluding CVs). There are no additional specific formatting instructions or guidelines, but we do ask that the following be addressed:

Motivation

A clear statement of intellectual merit of the research and expected significance should be included. In addition, broader impact (i.e., importance for policy) should be discussed.

Contribution

The description should be clear about the specific contribution. This section should include the related literature in the area of focus, and should explain the gaps in the literature and how the research team’s proposed project addresses these gaps.

Approach

The approach section should include a brief description of the design, including information about the treatments proposed and the number of participants needed for each treatment. In addition, this section should address the theoretical model underlying the research question, and should propose several hypotheses that will be tested by the design. The research proposal may include (but is not limited to) a combination of artefactual field experiments and surveys, conducted with any of the treatment group children or parents.

Researcher Qualifications

Each researcher should provide a brief statement about his/her research interests and expertise in the area of study.

Curriculum Vitae

A curriculum vitae for each researcher should be included. These CVs do not need to fit into the 5 page limit; however, short and concise CVs are encouraged.

Submission

Submission should be made electronically to

Anya Samak
asamak@wisc.edu

Investigators submitting proposals are encouraged to talk to Anya prior to submission to discuss the requirements and tailor the proposal to fit within the guidelines of the RFP. Please e-mail rather than call. If we have too many proposals for me to handle we may refer you to one of the research specialists.