

UW-RDRC and IRP Extramural Mentored Fellowships on Poverty, Retirement, and Disability Research

Application Deadline: Monday, February 17, 2025 by 11:59pm PST

ABOUT FELLOWSHIPS

The University of Wisconsin-Madison Retirement and Disability Research Center (UW-RDRC) and Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) have funding to support up to three research fellowships focused on the study of economically vulnerable populations related to poverty, retirement, and disability policy. Funded by a cooperative agreement with the Social Security Administration, this fellowship program is designed to expand the reach of poverty research into issues related to retirement and disability policies and programs. Issues and studies of special interest include:

- Interactions between public assistance and social insurance over the life course;
- The role of disabilities, health conditions, health insurance, and financial access for household financial security;
- How economically vulnerable households combine work, pensions, and social insurance over the life course;
- Low-net-wealth households and retirement well-being, including the role of housing wealth, saving, and debt, and
- Structural barriers that may contribute to disparate outcomes among people who have been adversely affected by persistent poverty.

ABOUT IRP

IRP is a center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and inequality and the impact of related policies and programs. As the National Research Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, IRP coordinates the **U.S. Collaborative of Poverty Centers (CPC)** in an integrated set of activities with the goal of improving the effectiveness of public policies to reduce poverty and inequality and their impacts on the well-being of the American people.

Research | Training | Policy | Practice

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ABOUT UW-RDRC

The UW-RDRC is a multidisciplinary research program that conducts applied research in household finance, consumer behavior and financial security over the life course with an emphasis on informing policy and practice with evidence-based strategies. As a designated center within the **Social Security Administration Retirement and Disability Research Consortium** (SSA RDRC), the UW-RDRC oversees research, dissemination, and training programs, which develop evidence that assist policymakers, the public, and the media in understanding issues in Social Security, retirement, and disability policy.

TERMS

Eligibility

Applications to the fellowships are invited from U.S.-based non-tenured junior faculty or postdoctoral researchers within 3 years of dissertation. Junior researchers are particularly encouraged to apply. Eligible individuals should be associated with a domestic institution. Applicants should propose to investigate topics that address Social Security, retirement, and disability, especially related to economically vulnerable populations, to be considered for the fellowship. Single/solo-authored projects are preferred.

Contract Period

The Extramural Mentored Fellowship is available for up to 12 months beginning as early as Summer 2025.

Participation Payments

Participants will receive three quarterly payments of \$15,000, for \$45,000 total.

Commitment

- Submit brief quarterly progress reports of work accomplished during the preceding three months on **October 15, 2025; January 15, 2026; April 15, 2026 and July 15, 2026** to hallie.lienhardt@wisc.edu. (template will be provided)
- Monthly mentor and peer discussion Zoom calls.
- A completed research report, brief, and policy abstract using style guide and templates provided.

Work will be shared with the SSA and all publications and products associated with the grant will be required to acknowledge this funding.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be submitted electronically to the [application form](#) by 2/17/25.

Applicants should provide the following materials as one PDF file:

1. Cover page listing (1 page):

- a. Scholar name
- b. Project Title
- c. Plain language abstract (250 words or less)
- d. Results of previous IRP or RDRC funding (if applicable)
2. Description of proposed work (3 pages double-spaced maximum)
 - a. Research questions and significance to RDRC themes and poverty
 - b. Methodology and approach to be used
 - c. Data sources
 - d. Project timeline
 - e. References (Note: not included in the page limit)
3. Fellowship goals and plans for future work (1 page)
 - a. The training goals and mentoring support needs during the fellowship
 - b. How this work fits into the scholar's development
 - c. The proposed research papers and other related work that could emerge from the project
 - d. The relevance of this research for the field, for policymakers, and for the public
4. Current curriculum vitae

SELECTION CRITERIA

Funding decisions will be based on the scientific merit or potential of the proposed research, as well as the extent that projects engage researchers new to retirement and disability policy research. Priority will be given to awards for solo-authored work by junior faculty. All proposals will be scored by subject matter experts and then reviewed by the SSA before providing final approval.

CONTACTS

Questions should be directed to:
Hallie Lienhardt | hallie.lienhardt@wisc.edu

TIMELINE

Deadline for applications	February 17, 2025
Notification	March/April 2025
Fellowship begins	Summer 2025
Quarterly progress reports	October 15, 2025; January 15, 2026; April 15, 2026; July 15, 2026
Draft	July 15, 2026
Report, brief, and policy abstract	August 31, 2026

***Note:** Dates and reporting requirement deadlines are subject to adjustment based on start date.