

Call for Applications

Professional Development Training Series on Poverty and Economic Mobility Research 2025–2026 Academic Year

Application Deadline: **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**, 11:59 p.m. CT

Optional Webinar: April 11, 2025, from

1:00–1:30 p.m. Eastern | 12:00–12:30 p.m. Central | 11:00–11:30 p.m. Mountain | 10:00 a.m.–10:30 p.m. Pacific

[Add to Calendar](#) (iCal file)

Posted: March 26, 2025

ABOUT THE TRAINING SERIES

As the National Research Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility, the **Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP)** at the University of Wisconsin–Madison invites applications from continuing PhD students for its 2025–2026 Professional Development Training Series on Poverty and Economic Mobility Research. This training series is provided with the financial support of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Office of Human Services Policy (U.S. DHHS/ASPE/HSP).

IRP is offering this virtual quarterly training series from fall 2025 through spring 2026 to 10 students. Awardees will receive a stipend of \$500 for their participation. The series is designed to increase researchers:

- (1) interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of policy-relevant research contexts, including the policymaking processes in federal agencies that administer human services programs;
- (2) ability to communicate with policy and public audiences effectively;
- (3) ability to engage various groups in research development and dissemination; and
- (4) knowledge about research career paths outside of academia.

ABOUT IRP

The Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) is a center for interdisciplinary research into the causes and consequences of poverty and inequality in the United States and the impacts 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)**. IRP and its partner centers support and train poverty and economic mobility scholars. In addition, IRP provides relevant, cutting-edge research on a wide range of topics with the goal of improving the effectiveness of public policies to reduce poverty and its consequences.

Research | Training | Policy | Practice

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR PLANNING AND EVALUATION (ASPE), OFFICE OF HUMAN SERVICES POLICY (HSP)

The Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation is the principal advisor to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on policy development. ASPE is responsible for major activities in policy coordination, legislation development, strategic planning, policy research, evaluation, and economic analysis. Within ASPE, the Office of Human Services Policy (HSP) conducts policy research, analysis, evaluation, and coordination on various issues across the Department, including but not limited to, poverty and measurement, marginalized communities, early childhood education and child welfare, family strengthening, economic support for families, and youth development. HSP serves as a liaison with other agencies on broad economic matters and is the Department's lead on poverty research and analysis.

TERMS

Eligibility

Proposals are invited from individuals who will be enrolled in a PhD program in the 2025–2026 academic year at a U.S. university. Note that students must have completed their first year of their program before the start of the 2025–2026 academic year. University of Wisconsin–Madison graduate students are ineligible for this training series. Through their application materials, applicants must demonstrate an interest in pursuing a research career focused on issues related to poverty and economic mobility, with a particular focus on human services programs.

To be eligible, applicants must either be from an economically disadvantaged background or currently attending a university that is not designated as an [R1 “very high research activity” by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education](#). To meet the economically disadvantaged definition, applicants must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- come from a low-income family;
- be from a family in which neither parent earned a four-year college degree;
- come from an underserved urban, rural, or farming community;
- have attended a high school with limited college preparatory curriculum;
- have attended a high school in a high poverty concentration school district;
- have other economic family circumstances that have impacted the applicant's educational opportunities.

Contract Period

The training series will run from fall 2025 through spring 2026. We expect to hold the four two-hour virtual trainings on Friday afternoons. Tentative dates include:

- Friday, October 17, 2025, from 1:30–3:30 CT
- Friday, December 12, 2025, from 1:30–3:30 CT
- Friday, February 23, 2026, from 1:30–3:30 CT

- Friday, April 24, 2026, from 1:30–3:30 CT

Funding

Selected students will receive a \$500 stipend to participate in the virtual trainings.

Commitment

Receipt of this stipend from IRP will require a commitment to attend and actively engage in four two-hour virtual trainings provided from fall 2025 to spring 2026.

Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed as follows:

1. Applications will be screened for completeness and eligibility:
 - a. online application completed;
 - b. application materials uploaded;
 - c. applicant is from an economically disadvantaged background group and/or is attending a non-R1 institution; and
 - d. applicant is expected to be a continuing PhD student at a U.S. university other than UW-Madison in the 2025–2026 academic year.
2. Qualifying applications will be scored by IRP faculty and staff based on the following criteria:
 - a. demonstrated interest in pursuing a research career focused on issues related to poverty and economic mobility with a particular focus on human services programs;
 - b. compelling description of how this training series will advance the applicant’s career goals; and
 - c. the applicant’s record of scholarly engagement and potential for scholarly achievement, taking into account the relative advantages and constraints on resources over the course of the applicant's graduate education.

Award Info

IRP anticipates selecting up to 10 students for the 2025–2026 academic year. Selection will be finalized in early June 2025.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Submit application via the [online Application Form](#). Applicants should fill out the application materials and provide the materials outlined below as one PDF file, in the order listed, by the application deadline. Your application should include:

1. **A letter of interest** (no more than two single-spaced pages) that:
 - a. describes your poverty and economic mobility research interests, as well as your professional goals in this area, progress toward them, and accomplishments to date; and

b. specifies the status of your studies in the 2025–2026 academic year (e.g., pre-dissertator PhD student) and how your scholarly and career development will be aided by this training, particularly at this stage of your education.

2. **Current resume** or curriculum vitae.

3. **Transcripts** (from graduate degree program; will accept unofficial transcripts).

CONTACT

All inquiries, including questions on the application process, should be directed to irpapply@ssc.wisc.edu.

TIMELINE

Call Release	March 26, 2025
Optional Webinar	April 11, 2025 from 12:00–12:30 CT https://uwmadison.zoom.us/j/93179996607 Add to Calendar (iCal file)
Application Deadline	April 30, 2025
Notification	Early June 2025
Training Dates	Tentative dates include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Friday, October 17, 2025, from 1:30–3:30 CT• Friday, December 12, 2025, from 1:30–3:30 CT• Friday, February 23, 2026, from 1:30–3:30 CT• Friday, April 24, 2026, from 1:30–3:30 CT