

Funding IFS-Oriented Research – Foundation for Self Leadership

The Foundation for Self Leadership is pleased to invite funding requests from researchers in support of rigorous studies to determine the effects of IFS in a broad variety of settings and applications.

This funding initiative is aligned with the Foundation’s leading goal of advancing research toward establishing IFS as an evidence-based practice within psychotherapy and beyond to promote healing, well-being, and Self leadership. By designing this program, the Foundation is affirming the value and significance of empirical evidence, as established through peer-reviewed qualitative or quantitative analysis that is consistent with investigative methods appropriate within the professional discipline.

Based on overwhelming anecdotal evidence, as relayed by IFS psychotherapists and other practitioners, the Foundation believes that IFS has powerfully positive implications in fostering health and harmony within and among individuals as well as groups of individuals and organizations. The intent of funding the research effort is to inform, challenge, expand, and disseminate our collective understanding of IFS, anchoring this understanding in empirical observations informed by scientific and social science-based quality research.

It is important to emphasize that, by funding research following recommendations of an independent review council (see application process below), the Foundation is facilitating rather than dictating the research approach and protecting the objectivity of research rather than embracing a specific outcome. The Foundation explicitly states that it will not attempt in any way to influence the results of the research, will endeavor to avoid any perception of influence, and will maintain at all times a hands-off approach when it comes to the actual research.

The Foundation upholds the notion that the growth of IFS depends on continued enhancement and expansion of the model, based on, but possibly far beyond, its initial construct. The scope and quality of independent research involving IFS will be solely directed by the research community through competitive research funding—not by the Foundation. This arms-length relationship between the Foundation and the actual research will be in the best interest of the model, resulting in further development and growth of its evidence base.

Funding Priorities

Consistent with its strategic research priorities, the Foundation will consider funding competitive grant applications that seek to examine how the IFS psychotherapy modality influences the treatment of mental disorders and advances emotional healing. Of primary but not sole interest are clinical studies for treating individual trauma, anxiety and depression.

The Foundation recognizes that IFS therapy has shown promising results in alleviating physical pain, as shown in a proof-of-concept randomized controlled trial published in the *Journal of Rheumatology*.¹ As such, funding will be considered, to the extent that funds are available and the proposed studies are

compelling and timely, with the objective to support research that examines the physiological effects of IFS, how it may reduce chronic pain, and how it may advance patient-centered care and health coaching.

Beyond mental and physical health, the Foundation may entertain funding of research that broadens the scope of IFS empirical evidence, including applications in couples counseling, governance and organizational settings, and IFS in education. Researchers in this arena are encouraged to submit letters of intent to the Foundation's Board before proceeding to apply for funds.

Funding Eligibility

Applicants for research funding include the following:

- Not-for-profit organizations (secondary and postsecondary academic institutions, research centers, social service agencies, hospitals, medical groups schools, spiritual centers, etc.)
- State-controlled entities (colleges, universities or social service departments)
- Individual researchers who have the support and IRB approval from such organizations.

Scope of Funding

The Foundation for Self Leadership intends to facilitate initial research that involves IFS. The desire is for its funding to help position research awardees well for larger competitive funding. In line with its current mission and this intention, the Foundation will limit its support to seed funds necessary for developing pilot, proof-of-concept or feasibility studies or supporting Phase-I-type research involving IFS. It is anticipated that these funds will advance the IFS research agenda by allowing funded researchers to gather preliminary data and intermediate outcomes requisite for more comprehensive studies, which may require substantial research grants from other sources.

Funded research projects are projected to last no longer than two years.

Funding at this stage will range from \$15K to \$50K based on the availability of funds. The Foundation does not support overhead costs.

Research conducted by graduate students may be considered, as long as the co-PI is a qualified faculty credentialed in the proposed field.

Funded projects are eligible for a competitive second round of funding, once the first project is successfully complete. Unfunded projects are invited to resubmit with changes made to reflect reviewers' recommendations and comments.

Funding Process

All applications submitted to the Foundation for competitive funding will be reviewed by at least three members of the IFS Independent Review Council (IRC), who will anonymously present their compiled review comments to the Board for consideration and action.

The Foundation Board will make funding decisions regarding grant applications on a quarterly basis. Applications need to be submitted 3 months in advance of a Board’s research-funding meeting for consideration then. Applications submitted later than these deadlines will be reviewed and acted upon by the next quarterly Board meeting. The Board will further reserve the right to expedite the review process for revised and resubmitted applications or applications around topics that are deemed of a time-sensitive nature.

Date by which applications are due	Dates by which Board will enact on funding requests
January 15	April 30
April 15	July 31
July 15	October 30
October 15	January 31

IRC will review the applications based on the following eight review criteria, described below by the general questions that they address. Each criterion will be scored on a scale of 1 to 4 (with 4 representing “effectively addressed”).

- Significance of Study: How will the study address questions of importance regarding the role that IFS plays in healing, fostering health, advancing well-being, achieving better interactions between individuals, promoting organizational effectiveness, etc.? How broad is its intended impact in terms of applications? What larger questions will this study generate, to be addressed in a next larger follow-up research?
- Timeliness of Study: How timely is this research study in terms of topic, tools, or questions asked vis-à-vis research developments or regional/national trends?
- Intellectual Merit: Is the proposed model, strategy or methodology sound and consistent with the basic disciplinary guidelines for quality and thoroughness? Is the logical model tying the proposed method to projected outcomes reasonable and well aligned with the specific aims of the study? For studies attempting novel ideas, interventions or techniques, how well will the “newness” risk factor be controlled?
- Researcher Readiness: Are the PIs qualified to lead the research study? Do they have the necessary training or expertise or leadership capabilities to manage the study to completion? For multiple PIs or institutions, what is the history and nature of the proposed collaboration? (Students can be co-PIs, with a qualified faculty advisor serving as the other co-PI.)
- Institutional Support: What is the extent of tangible and intangible support provided by the institution(s) housing the study or the PIs toward the proposed research? How are this support and the general environment expected to contribute to the success of the study?
- Likelihood of Completion: Are the research operational conditions described in the proposal consistent with the proposed timeline for completion? How will they enhance the study’s probability of success?
- Budget Efficiency: To what extent does the proposed budget conform with the goals and methods of the study?

- Selection & Protection of Human Subjects: Where applicable, how are subjects selected? Is there a clear IRB review process in place? Are there well thought-out provisions to minimize risks or harm to subjects possibly resulting from their participation in the research, ensure and protect their privacy, keep them fully informed of their rights, and gather their consent to participate?

Applications should be submitted to Research@FoundationIFS.org in a consolidated PDF file.

- First Page
 - Title of Proposed Study
 - Area of Focus (e.g., psychotherapy, medicine, etc.)
 - Number of PIs
 - Is this a first submission? ___ Yes; ___ No (if No, requesting second-round)
 - If No, New or Revised submission?
 - PI(s) Information: Name of PI(s), Institutional Affiliation, Coordinates (physical address, email address, social media contacts).
 - Abstract (maximum of 350 words) addressing the context for the study, anticipated length of the study and outcomes, and highlights of the strategy to be adopted.
 - Total Funds Requested:

- Narrative (a maximum of 12 pages/addressing the criteria above/see below for format)
 - Statement on how this proposed study advances knowledge about effects of IFS
 - Context for the Proposed Research Study in the general discipline
 - Research Objective
 - Conceptual Framework
 - Method to be Used (as appropriate to type of study; for intervention studies for example, describe intervention model, subject selection and screening, assignment of control vs treatment groups, scales to be used, etc., data gathering and analysis)
 - Qualifications of Research team
 - Timeline for the Study's Various Components
 - Description of the Institutional Environment
 - Dissemination Plan (how will the findings be disseminated to the extent it is applicable)
 - Next steps/Future studies anticipated upon the completion of this study

Narrative Format: 8.5x11 (portrait) | 1inch margins | No smaller than 11-point font (no restrictions on font) | No tighter than 1.5- line spacing | Footer: title of proposal - Narrative – page #/total pages

- Pertinent Literature Citations

— Proposed Total Budget

- Personnel / Subject Selection / Treatment costs (where applicable) / Scales & Tools / (No overhead costs)
- Brief narrative not to exceed one page

— Appendices:

- CV of PIs (no longer than 4 pages: professional positions and achievements, listing of at least 5 recent, relevant publications, former and current research grants, academic credentials and honors)
- If applicable, copy of IRB application
- Letter of Support from Institution
- Letter of Support from Colleague (outside the institution) in Field of Research Study

¹ Nancy A. Shadick, Nancy F. Sowell, Michelle L. Frits, Suzanne M. Hoffman, Shelley A. Hartz, Fran D. Booth, Martha Sweezy, Patricia R. Rogers, Rina L. Dubin, Joan C. Atkinson, Amy L. Friedman, Fernando Augusto, Christine K. Iannaccone, Anne H. Fossel, Gillian Quinn, Jing Cui, Elena Losina, and Richard C. Schwartz, *Journal of Rheumatology*, November 2013, 40(11): 1831-1841; published online on August 10, 2013 at: <http://www.jrheum.org/content/early/2013/08/10/jrheum.121465>.