



Foundation for SELF Leadership

As approved by the Board of Directors on October 24, 2016 | updates approved on February 7, 2020

IFS Graduate Research Fellowship Program To Study Internal Family Systems Treatment Modality Sponsored by the Foundation for Self Leadership

Annual Fellowship Cycle

Introduction

Graduate students are often searching for meaningful, impactful, fundable research for their dissertations or theses. The Foundation for Self Leadership is pleased to announce a new competitive funding opportunity for graduate students in mental health programs to engage in rigorous studies of IFS Therapy. We invite you to consider the Foundation's funding priorities as a context for your research.

IFS, acknowledged by SAMHSA's NREPP as an evidence-based practice, has shown promising empirical outcomes in the treatment of generalized anxiety disorders, depression, and depressive symptoms and physical health conditions, and effective in supporting general functioning and well-being. Please see the following [link](#) for the full posting as it appeared on NREPP.SAMHSA.Gov. The Foundation is encouraging, and supporting where possible, independent research that examines the IFS model as a treatment for a broad range of mental health issues. This document will guide you to important resources in order for you to consider designing a fundable thesis or dissertation examining the effects of IFS on clients.

IFS & Research Priority Resources

This research fellowship program is sponsored by generous donations and grants. Please visit the Foundation's website at www.FoundationIFS.org. Here you will learn about the Foundation's mission and values, its history and organization, the IFS model and resources, as well as its **research priorities**.

The Research section includes information on **research priorities** (see <http://FoundationIFS.org/research/IFS-research-priorities>). In terms of graduate fellowships, funding priorities will be given in this order to: doctoral dissertations, studies leading to peer-reviewed publications, and master's theses. It is the intention of the Foundation, where possible, to make fellowship awards in each of these categories.

Where appropriate, funded graduate students are requested to use the IFS Adherence Scale as part of the proposed study. This is a tool to determine fidelity to IFS constructs and protocols, would enhance the rigor of the study, and make it potentially more attractive for publication. This tool has been designed for researchers like you and can be found on the Foundation's website at <http://FoundationIFS.org/research>. It is highly recommended that you use the Adherence Scale if you use a study design where IFS is being conducted by trained IFS therapists. The Foundation will provide trained raters to complete the ratings for your study if you choose to use the Adherence Scale.

IFS Graduate Research Fellowship Program Requirements

- Proposed research must be focused in total or in significant part on the Internal Family Systems Model. Please see the research priority areas on the Foundation website.
- Preference is given to doctoral dissertations or studies leading to peer-reviewed publications, though master's theses may also be funded, depending on the rigor of the study and the quality of the other applications during that cycle.
- The research must be guided by a committee approved by your University or with a professor co-author, and Human Subjects approval must be sought and received through your University for all funded projects.
- Applicant must be a graduate student in good standing enrolled in a graduate program at an accredited college or university in the U.S. or in Canada. The student must demonstrate the need for funding for the proposed study in the budget justification.
- In this phase of the funding, students enrolled in these academic departments are considered: psychology, neuroscience, cognitive science, social work, marriage and family therapy, and counselor education.
- In general, we encourage potential applicants to reach out to us at research@FoundationIFS.org to discuss application before submitting applications. We offer this to ensure the best possible outcomes for applicants who meet the criteria and to save applicants time if their projects are not in line with the Foundations current funding priorities. Applicants from outside the US or Canada or those in post-doctoral programs are also encouraged to connect with us; applicants who don't meet the stringent criteria may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

IFS Graduate Research Fellowship Program Funding

To the extent funding is available, this Research Fellowship Program will fund up to three to five graduate students per year for between \$3,500 (master's thesis) and \$10,000 (doctoral dissertation or study leading to peer-reviewed publication) each, depending on the type of study, number of qualified proposals and the amount of funding available in any given proposal cycle. Awards are paid directly to the student, not to the University. All requested costs in the budget include stipends and direct research costs.

In addition, the funding will include support for IFS Level 1 for graduate students who, as part of their effort to enhance their knowledge of IFS, would seek such training.

Application Procedure

Please complete the following application and submit it electronically in one consolidated PDF file to research@FoundationIFS.org by 11:59pm EST on the due dates listed below. You will receive an email of receipt and final decisions will be made and announced via email within 60 days of the application due dates.

Due date for Cycle 1 is July 1, annually

Due date for Cycle 2 is October 1, annually

OUTLINE FOR IFS RESEARCH SCHOLARSHIP PROPOSALS

Cover Sheet

- Study Title
- Graduate Student Name and Contact Info (how many graduate credits completed to date)
- University and Department Name
- Research Advisor and Committee Members

Proposal Narrative

1. Description of Project (1 page)

- (A) Begin with an introduction including the issue and population to be researched, including research context.
- (B) Provide a list of specific questions that your research will address.
- (C) Provide a description of the proposed study design and methods (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.).
- (D) Indicate how your study fits the priorities of The Foundation for Self Leadership.
- (E) Describe the type of institutional support you have to help ensure success of your proposed research, including in particular research advice and support to be received by Research Advisor or Committee Members.
- (F) Propose a timeline for completing this study.

2. Recruitment & Data Collection (1 page)

Describe your approach to recruiting clients and working with a therapist to conduct the intervention, if applicable. Note how you will monitor data collection to ensure highest quality.

An IRB application is required (approval will be required during earliest phase of the research process) describing any potential human subject risks and how they will be mitigated. Provide a copy of consent form as applicable.

3. Analysis & Conclusions (1 page)

Describe how you will analyze the data. What product do you anticipate producing at the end of the project, and if possible, where might you publish the results? A final report must be submitted to the Foundation at the end of the study.

4. Budget and Justification (1 page)

The largest portion of the budget is expected to be in the form of a stipend to the research fellow. Please identify the stipend and provide if applicable a breakdown of additional cost requested, basis for the cost(s) estimate, and how spending will be accounted for. Indicate total amount requested for this research study.

5. Timeline (1/2 page)

Provide a timeline for this research study including IRB and Committee approval processes as well as recruitment, data collection, analysis, write-up, and dissemination of results.

Justified Need for IFS Training

Describe the level of IFS exposure you have had and provide a rationale for why formal IFS training (Level-1), new or additional, would be needed to support or enhance your research effort as proposed.

Transcripts, Resumes, and CVs of Research Team

Attach the student's unofficial transcripts for all graduate studies as well as a current resume demonstrating all applicable professional experiences. Please provide advisor's and any other co-PI's CVs as well.

Letter of Recommendation

Attach a signed letter of recommendation from the graduate research advisor who should speak to the applicant's strengths, research skills, ability to complete the proposed study in a professional and timely manner, and the advisor's role in the research study.

PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

An independent council will review all complete applications based on the following ten 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").

1. **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 future research?
2. **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? Where does this topic fit in with contemporary trends, advancements and controversies in its field?
3. **Intellectual Merit:** Is the proposed model, strategy or methodology sound and consistent with the basic disciplinary guidelines for quality and thoroughness? Are the proposed methods and projected outcomes 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?
4. **Data Analysis:** Is there a clear data management and analysis plan? Does the proposed analysis appropriately address the research questions? Is the analysis plan consistent with the design (e.g. exploratory vs. controlled)?
5. **Researcher Readiness:** Is the research team qualified to conduct the research study? Do they have the necessary training, expertise, and leadership capabilities to manage the study to completion? (Students can be co-PIs, with a qualified faculty advisor serving as the other co-PI.) Will the study be appropriately staffed with trained volunteers/assistants/coordinators/therapists?

6. 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?
7. 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? As applicable, how does the timeline account for study startup, staff training and turnover, recruitment milestones, procedural execution, and manuscript preparation?
8. Budget Efficiency: To what extent does the proposed budget conform with the goals and methods of the study? How is the budget making efficient use of Foundation funding? How would increasing or decreasing any line items affect the study?
9. 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? Is the recruitment strategy realistic and how does it address bias? For clinical studies, how are selection criteria consistent with current DSM or ICD guidelines?
10. Publishability: Does this study meet the basic research standards for eventual publication in high-impact peer-reviewed journals? Are there concerns about the study's publishability upon its completion?

Any questions or requests for clarification, please reach out to Research@FoundationIFS.org.