



IRC4HR Funding Guide

**INNOVATION
RESOURCE
CENTER** for HUMAN RESOURCES

What We Do

IRC4HR funds research and multi-stakeholder dialogues that produce practical and actionable insights and tools to help organizations, leaders, and workers succeed together through the profound business and social challenges of the 21st-century workplace.

We are interested in how new business models and the changing nature of work impact – and require new approaches to – organization design, leadership development, and workplace practices that lead to high levels of business performance and worker productivity and well-being.

Our most recent grants have supported research and design activities that include:

- Frameworks and practical recommendations to foster human-centered AI adoption in the workplace
- Piloting an intervention designed to help job seekers better identify well-fitting job opportunities
- Learning how successful leaders drive agility and collaboration across distributed teams by paying attention to internal network structure, relational content, and external ecosystems

- Defining the leadership and organizational capabilities for operating successfully in a business ecosystem, which requires a shift in mindset and a new and unique set of management practices
- Exploring how human relationships and connections at work – and in life – impact four pillars of well-being: purpose, resilience, growth, and health
- Defining the opportunities and challenges of an aging workforce, including a global innovation competition
- Co-creating the design of digital organization prototypes using a collaborative, iterative, learning, and solution-generating experience for business leaders from a cross-section of industries
- Developing a set of materials to educate PE firms about the value of investing in “good jobs” as a pathway to alpha returns

Research outcomes have been featured in MIT Sloan Management Review and Harvard Business Review, and distributed through IRC4HR’s and our grantees’ business, HR, and academic networks, websites, newsletters, and LinkedIn accounts.



Who We Are

Established as Industrial Relations Counselors (IRC) in 1926 by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., with a mission to “advance the knowledge and practice of human relations in the workplace,” IRC4HR remains dedicated to the creation and ongoing enhancement of work – and work environments – in which the goals and objectives of organizations, the aspirations of individuals, and the interests of society are served.

Today, our board members and staff are industry leaders and board directors representing major sectors, industries, and universities, including:

- Accenture
- AT&T
- Boston Consulting Group
- British Petroleum (BP)
- British Telecom (BT)
- Cornell University
- Ford Motor Company
- Gap Inc.
- General Motors
- IBM
- JP Morgan Chase
- JUST Capital
- Knology Ltd.
- Kroger
- Muskingum University
- National Academy of Human Resources
- NextEra Energy
- P&G
- PepsiCo
- Pittsburgh Theological Seminary
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Rutgers University
- The Conference Board
- The Walt Disney Company
- University of Wisconsin



Our Grantees

Beyond providing grant funds, we seek to build relationships. Our relationship with grantees is an important part of IRC4HR's value creation strategy.

IRC4HR supports grantees by

- providing input and feedback to study designs,
- participating in project advisory groups,
- reviewing drafts of research findings/reports,
- sharing their stories and becoming an advocate for what they are doing, and who is benefitting from it
- helping them network with other thought leaders and stakeholders who can both augment and benefit from their work.

IRC4HR seeks to make organizations more competitive, productive, and effective through improved organization design, leadership development, and people management practices, and to serve the mutually beneficial interests of organizations, workers, and society.

Recent Grantees



Emily Goligoski
Head of Research
Charter Works, Inc.



Paolo Gaudino
President
Aleria Research Corp.



Michèle Belot
Professor
Cornell University



Ellen G. Frank-Miller
Founder
WORC



Roland Deiser
Senior Drucker Fellow
Claremont University



Rob Cross
Professor
Babson College

Apply For Grants

We seek to fund “pracademic” research projects – those that bring the rigor of academic research and generate practical results that can be applied across multiple industries and organizations.

Our key stakeholders include business leaders, HR professionals, managers, workers, and public policymakers who seek to enhance – and remove barriers to – productivity, engagement, performance, and wellbeing in the workplace.

In response to the currently challenging research funding environment in the United States, our target grantees are US-based 501(c)(3) organizations. We may make exceptions for non-US proposals, generally for organizations that we have previously funded or for a uniquely extraordinary opportunity. We also occasionally fund non-501(c)(3) organizations that are mission-driven and pursuing research aligned with our areas of interest.

Our fiscal year runs from January 1st to December 31st. Grant applications are considered throughout the fiscal year. Once the funds for a fiscal year are allocated, incoming grant applications will be considered for the next funding cycle.

Individual grants range from \$5,000 to \$90,000, with larger grants distributed over multiple fiscal years. Typically grant amounts are \$10,000 to \$40,000. Because our grant funds are modest, our general policy is to not cover indirect costs, with minor exceptions (and not for more than ten percent of direct costs).

Prospective grantees are asked to clearly define the practical value of their proposed study, how it will be differentiated from existing research, and strategies for disseminating their findings.

If you are uncertain whether you should submit a proposal, please email us at info@irc4hr.org. For more information on applying for a grant, please visit <https://irc4hr.org/for-grantseekers/>.

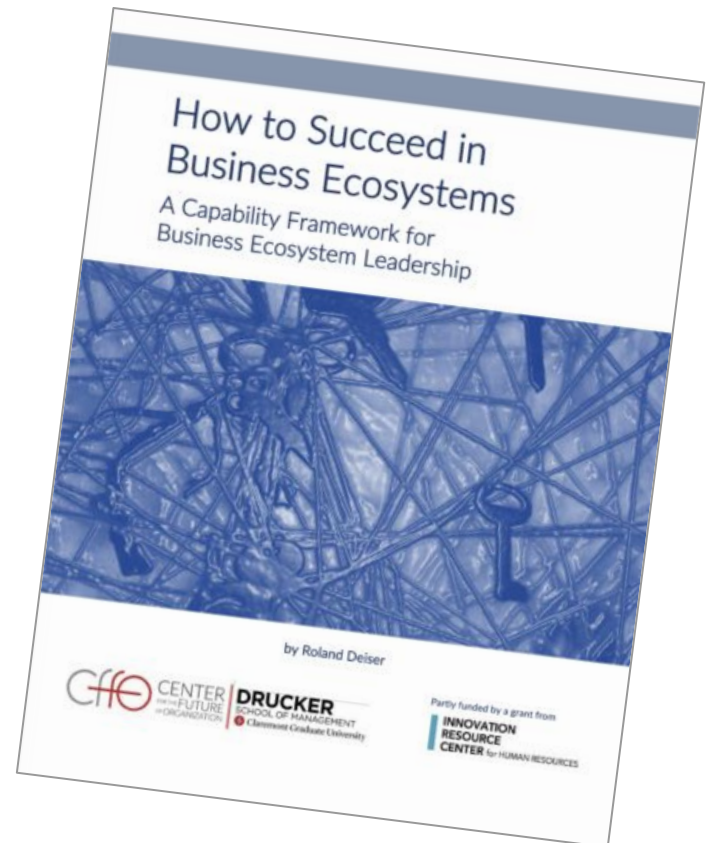


Apply For Grants

Grant proposals should be submitted via email to info@irc4hr.org, in a Microsoft Word (or comparable alternative) or PDF format.

The methods employed to conduct the research must be appropriately designed to address the proposed research questions and should produce usable outputs such as white papers, learning materials, assessment tools, organization design models, leadership capabilities, practice recommendations, and other deliverables for use by IRC4HR's stakeholders.

Research projects are more likely to receive funding if potential grantees also consider how their research contributes to “the knowledge and practice of human relations” within and across organizations in business, non-profit, and government sectors, as defined by our mission. For examples of recent studies that received IRC4HR grant funds, please visit the [Research](#) section on our website.



Each proposal for research grant funding is reviewed by the IRC4HR Board of Trustees, which includes business and non-profit executives from a broad range of functional and academic backgrounds.

After proposals are reviewed, the board meets face-to-face or via conference call to raise questions, discuss recommendations, and agree on final funding decisions. Occasionally, potential grantees will be invited to discuss their proposal and respond to questions to help the board reach a decision.

Please review the information in this guide to determine whether your project may be a good fit with IRC4HR's funding priorities. There is no need to speak with IRC4HR staff prior to submitting a proposal, but if you would like to explore or discuss your idea prior to developing your proposal, please send an email to info@irc4hr.org requesting a conversation.

Please note that, as a 501(c)(3) private foundation, the deliverables that IRC4HR funds must be made available to the public at no cost.



Apply For Grants

Grant Request Guidelines

Proposals generally include the following sections and information, although not all will be relevant for every proposal.

- Name(s), title(s), organization affiliation(s), and contact information for primary researcher(s); title of project; and contracting organization (recipient of funds); please indicate who to contact for follow-up questions regarding the proposal
- Purpose and brief abstract
 - What is the purpose of your proposed study and how would it contribute to IRC's mission and area of interest?
 - What is the “story” you want to tell with your research and/or the “case” you want to make?
- Project background and overview
 - Why is this research important?
 - What literature or existing area of practice does it extend (or create or disrupt)?
 - What is the practical value of your proposed research? How will it impact/influence/inform practice, policy, organization effectiveness, human performance and wellbeing, leadership, etc.?
 - What is the current landscape for this area of research? What is new and unique about your proposed research and how will it be differentiated from already existing or current work in this area
- Methodology, scope, and deliverables
 - What are the sources of the data?
 - If appropriate, has your sample been secured/approved for this project (yes, no)?
 - Describe the number and types of study source(s) of data, such as employee self-report, team leaders, managers, executives, etc.
 - Why are you using this particular methodology?
 - How is this methodology useful for answering the research questions/testing hypotheses?
 - What are the outputs/deliverables you expect to generate (e.g., white papers, journal articles, participant reports, assessment instruments, tools, learning materials, etc.)?
 - How/where do you plan to disseminate the outputs/deliverables from your work?
 - How do you propose to measure the impact of your work?
- Tasks, timeline, resources, and budget
 - What are the key tasks involved in conducting this work?
 - What is the estimated timeline for accomplishing the work (generally, project duration should not exceed two years from start to finish)?
 - What resources are required?
 - What is the proposed budget and how is it allocated across tasks and resources?
 - Has any other funding been sought or received for this project? If so, please provide the source(s) and amount(s).

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Proposal Evaluation Criteria

As described previously, IRC4HR seeks to fund projects that produce ‘pracademic’ research, which means that every research proposal should be (1) grounded in the literature of the field; built on a solid, theoretical basis; and based on sound methodology; and (2) have a focus on delivering data-driven, practical insights and outcomes that can be applied by some or all of IRC4HR’s key stakeholders (business leaders, HR executives, managers, workers, and policy makers).

To further assist in evaluating grant requests, the following criteria are applied:

- **Aligned** – how well does the research align with IRC4HR’s mission and area of interest?
- **"Pracademic"** - does the project feature robust, applied research and data-driven, practical insights?
- **Stakeholders** - are multiple stakeholders served?
- **Network Multiplier** – what kind of network does the potential grantee bring that can provide access to sources of data and/or facilitate distribution of outputs/research deliverables?
- **Distribution Options** – can outputs be delivered via multiple channels (e.g., papers, webinars, case studies, tools, etc.)? What are they?
- **Additive** – how, if at all, will the research build on/augment previous studies, practice, etc.?
- **Unique Opportunity** – what, if any, opportunity exists for (1) a major breakthrough in an area of interest or (2) a high-visibility/high impact set of findings or (3) a significant output from a small grant?

We look forward to receiving your proposal and grant request, and to the opportunity to support your work. If you have any questions, please send them to info@irc4hr.org.



www.irc4hr.org
