

Research Proposal Guidelines

Applicants are encouraged to [contact the BLS](#) to determine the availability of data and the feasibility of their project prior to submitting proposals. Research projects must meet the following four criteria:

- ← Be exclusively statistical in nature
- ← Have technical merit
- ← Be of significant interest to the BLS
- ← Further the [mission of the BLS](#)

Research proposals should be between 5 and 10 pages. They should include the following information:

1. An abstract summarizing the hypothesis to be tested, the data set involved, relevant variables, the empirical methods to be used, and the data outputs that will result from the project. (The abstract should be no longer than 300 words.)
2. A literature review including brief discussion of how the proposed research contributes to the existing body of research
3. The hypothesis that will be tested
4. The data set and variables that will be used in the analysis
5. The empirical methods that will be used
6. The specific data outputs that will result from the project, including a description of whether the research results will be presented as descriptive statistics or frequencies, or via multivariate analysis such as regression coefficients
7. An explanation of why the research requires use of non-public data
8. An explanation of why the research is of interest to the BLS and how it furthers the agency's mission

In addition to the research proposal, applications should include the following information:

1. A description of how the research will be presented, such as in a doctoral dissertation, journal article, or book
2. The source of funding for the project (if any)
3. A statement as to whether the work will be conducted in collaboration with researchers from other organizations
4. A timeline detailing access dates at the BLS, the frequency and duration of visits, and an estimate of the total length of time needed to complete the project. (All projects are of limited duration, with a maximum time period of two years. At the end of the project, researchers may submit written proposals for an extension of time in which to access the data. If resources are available, access may be granted for an additional time not to exceed an additional two years. Researchers should contact the BLS at rowan.carol@bls.gov to determine the appropriate time frame for their project. Note that final revisions and journal submissions must be completed prior to an agreement's end date.)
5. Resumes that include descriptions of the professional background and relevant research record of each individual who will access the data
6. [Answers to the Researcher Supplemental Questions form](#). (Attachment 1)

Application Deadlines

The BLS has four application deadlines each year:

- ← **January 15th**
- ← **April 15th**
- ← **July 15th**
- ← **October 15th**

Applications may be accepted in advance but will not be reviewed or processed until after the next application deadline. **Generally, it takes approximately three months after the application deadline to receive approval for research proposals. Once a proposal is approved, it can take an additional three months to process and fully execute the legal agreement authorizing data access between the BLS and the recipient organization.** Researchers should factor these estimates into their timetable for beginning research.

All applications should be submitted electronically (in Word or PDF files). Please do not email ".zip" files, as these will be automatically rejected by the BLS email screening mechanism. Applications should be sent to Carol Rowan at rowan.carol@bls.gov.

Privacy Act Statement. The information you provide will be used by staff at the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) to determine your eligibility for access to confidential BLS data and for other administrative purposes. Providing the information on this form is voluntary; however, the BLS will not be able to grant access to confidential BLS data without this information. The BLS is authorized to request the information on this form under Title 5, United States Code, Section 301.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. This information is being collected to allow access to confidential information on a limited basis to eligible researchers for approved statistical analysis. We estimate that it will take an average of 20 hours to complete this proposal. The responses to this collection of information are voluntary. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Management Systems, Attention: BLS Clearance Coordinator, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Room 4080, Washington, DC 20212.

OMB Control Number: 1220-0NEW
OMB Approval Expires: xx/xx/xxxx

Attachment 1

Supplemental Questions

These questions help the BLS to determine which type of data sharing agreement is appropriate for your particular circumstances and to complete required paperwork. Thank you for your cooperation.

1. If you are not a student, have you been employed in a career position with your organization for at least 90 days?
 yes
 no
 student
 other (please explain the nature of your affiliation with the organization)

2. If you are a student, have you been enrolled for at least five months?
 yes
 no
 not a student
 other (please explain the nature of your affiliation with the institution)

3. If you are a student, are you enrolled at least half time?
 yes
 no
 not a student
 other (please explain the nature of your affiliation with the institution)

4. If you are a student, what is your expected month and year of graduation?
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5. What is the name, title, and full mailing address of the official at your employer or educational institution who will sign the written legal agreement with the BLS?
(This official must have authority to enter into legally binding agreements on behalf of your employer or educational institution. For educational institutions, this official may be a President, Vice President, Provost, Director of Sponsored Research, Contracts Officer or a similar official. Note that a Dean or Department Chair will not be accepted.)

Last:

First:

Title:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

