Call and Guidelines for Education Research Conference Proposals
American Educational Research Association
Submission Deadline: March 5, 2020

Submissions for the spring cycle must be sent to EdResearchConference@aera.net as an e-mail attachment no later than 11:59 pm Eastern Time on Thursday, March 5, 2020.

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) invites proposals for conferences in education research. AERA supports research conferences intended to break new ground in substantive areas of inquiry, stimulate new lines of study on issues that have been largely unexplored, or develop innovative research methods or techniques that can contribute more generally to education research. Conferences may focus on conceptual, empirical, or methodological issues important to understanding the state of the knowledge and charting directions for future research. It is anticipated that research conferences will draw upon diverse disciplines and fields of inquiry where there is relevant scientific and scholarly expertise. The purposes of this program are to foster the accumulation of knowledge, to enhance dissemination, to encourage innovation, and to advance studies of the highest quality in education research.

Research Conference Format

AERA research conferences are intended to be intensive research convenings. They may vary in size, scope, format, and structure depending on the goals and the work to be accomplished. The typical size is 12–18 participants. Larger research conferences are feasible if they are appropriate to achieving the research objectives of the Call and if appropriate resources can be identified. Conferences funded through this initiative are usually two days long or may span three days.

- Conferences should generally take place within approximately 12 months after the funding decision is made.
- For some topics more sustained, longer-term efforts will be necessary to assess and synthesize diverse strands of research and develop new conceptual frameworks or methodological tools. In such cases, the principal investigator(s) may propose to convene two or more research-intensive meetings, typically over a 12–18-month period.
- This Call is NOT intended to fund or supplement conferences that occur on a regular basis or public lectures or conferences aimed at dissemination, broad discussion of a topic, or professional development.

In addition to in-person meetings, AERA is open to innovative ways to hold research
conferences, including use of technologies that might support videoconferencing and other multimedia formats. Applicants who contemplate the use of innovative methods for addressing the goals of the conference and sharing knowledge are strongly encouraged to apply.

Prospective applicants may review previously funded research conferences here.

**Awards**

Awards may range in amount depending on the size, scope, and duration of the proposed research conference. Budgets for research conferences may range from $10,000 to $35,000. AERA will fund up to 6 awards annually. Conferences that involve additional sources of support to the principal investigator(s) in the form of direct funds, in-kind support, or a combination of the two should be specified in the proposal and reflected in the budget. AERA does not provide overhead support or indirect costs to institutions or other entities assisting in administering the award. In addition, AERA does not fund salary or stipends for principal investigator(s) or honoraria for participants.

**Application Process**

The AERA Research Advisory Committee (RAC) holds one application review cycle each year to consider research conference proposals. Required submission materials must be sent as e-mail attachments to EdResearchConference@aera.net. Applicants typically will be notified within three months of submission of a proposal.

**Eligibility Requirements for Research Conference Proposals**

The eligibility requirements below must be met when submitting a proposal:

- The principal investigator(s) must be a member of AERA at the time of submission.
- The principal investigator(s) must be affiliated with an academic institution, research institution, or other organization that will be responsible for administering the award. Joint proposals from cooperating institutions are appropriate.
- Conferences may be held only in the United States, unless the principal investigator(s) is an AERA member at an institution outside the United States and the proposed location is appropriate and cost effective given the goals of the conference.
- Individuals may submit conference proposals on behalf of an AERA division or SIG or more than one division or SIG. Interested divisions or SIGs may initiate discussion of potential research conferences by identifying education researchers whom they would like see to taking the lead on their behalf. The principal investigator(s) needs to develop and submit the proposal as well as lead the research conference, if funded. Those submitting such
proposals need to specify (a) the potential division(s) or SIG(s) that will co-sponsor the conference, (b) why the division(s) or SIG(s) is interested in co-sponsorship, (c) the relevance to the research aims of the division or SIG, and (d) how co-sponsorship by that entity (those entities) will contribute to the research impact sought by the principal investigator(s) and those units.

**Review Criteria for Research Conference Proposals**

The following criteria will be used in reviewing proposals:

- The conference focuses on a significant research problem; the topic involves a new approach to an issue or area of research or shows the potential to advance research or break new ground.
- The topic selected has not received adequate coverage at other research conferences and annual scholarly meetings.
- The conference, including preparatory work, synthesizes and builds upon extant research. The conference also analyzes relevant studies or data with conceptual frameworks or methodological tools that show promise of yielding an advance.
- The conference draws upon the range of disciplines or areas of inquiry that can contribute to substantial new advancements in ongoing research areas or to innovative study of new issues.
- The structure and format of the conference (e.g., number of participants, advance preparation of papers or working memoranda, modes of presentation, working activities) engender confidence for a successful outcome.
- There is a well-specified plan for constituting the conference, inviting or identifying participants, organizing and conducting the conference, and planning for a report or product of publishable quality.
- The potential attendee list reflects an appreciation of the demographic and scholarly diversities that can advance the research topic.
- A feasible budget and support plan are provided, including specification of any in-kind or direct support contributing to the resource needs of the conference (e.g., other grants, facilities at the primary organizer’s institution).
- The principal investigator(s) has demonstrated capacity or experience in leading such activities as research teams or review groups, editing special journal volumes, or convening similarly situated meetings.
- The conference and its outcomes and products show promise for advancing or reshaping the field.
Research Conference Proposal Contents

The information listed below must be included and addressed as part of the proposal. All of the substantive components of the proposal should be submitted as one PDF. The curriculum vitae of the principal investigator(s) should be submitted as a separate PDF.

- **Cover page:** Title and probable date of conference, name of principal investigator or investigators, and the entity responsible for the administration and financial reporting on the grant
- **Abstract:** A 200–300 word abstract of the research conference
- **Proposal narrative:** A maximum of five single-spaced pages (excluding the references, budget, and appendices) to include but not be limited to:
  - a statement of objectives;
  - an overview of the research literatures, methodological or measurement issues, or databases relevant to the objectives;
  - consideration of the need for and potential benefits of such a conference;
  - an explanation of how the conference will contribute to the advancement or improvement of extant areas of inquiry or nascent or emerging areas;
  - Information on the probable location and approximate dates of the conference and its anticipated size and scope;
  - the principal investigator(s) and any planning committee to be involved;
  - information on any related meetings or activities on the same topic;
  - information on recruitment of participants and expectations of their participation;
  - discussion of how the conference will be organized and conducted;
  - specification of a dissemination plan for results or outcomes; and
  - recruitment information. The narrative should address the breadth and background of persons sought for the conference in relation to the conference objectives (e.g., scholars, practitioners, policy makers, junior scholars) and the explicit emphasis on spanning diverse fields or disciplines of relevance to the topic. If specific individuals have already been invited, information on these persons and their backgrounds can be included along with the draft agenda.

- **Reference list:** The research cited in the narrative (in addition to the maximum of five pages)
- **Detailed budget:** The amount of support being requested of AERA may not exceed $35,000. As indicated above, AERA does not fund indirect or overhead costs; salary or stipends for principal investigator(s); or honoraria for participants. Budget notes can include information on any relevant direct or in-kind contributions that may be provided for the conference by other sources, including the institution of the principal investigator(s).
- **Draft agenda:** A draft agenda with sufficient detail to convey how the structure of the
conference will support its stated objectives

- **Supporting materials:** A list of potential participants and, where appropriate, information on persons already invited or letters of support from affiliated institution(s) or entities.
- **Curriculum vitae:** The curriculum vitae of the principal investigator(s).

**Reporting and Publication Requirements**

Consistent with the aims of the Research Conference Initiative, funded conferences are expected to yield products that can advance inquiry in the field. Articles, books, and other research products are expected. The following outlines reporting requirements and possible products.

*Conference Report and Structured Reporting Abstract:* A conference report **must** be submitted to AERA within three months after the date the conference is held. The conference report and abstract will be assigned a Digital Object Identifier, added to the AERA Online Paper Repository, and disseminated through the AERA website. These documents and any background papers or presentation materials (including electronic presentations) must also be submitted within three months after the conference date.

*Policy and Public Forums in Washington, DC:* It is anticipated that principal investigators will participate in a policy session, public forum, or other outreach activity directed toward broadening the research impact of the conference. Participation could include such activities as congressional or agency briefings, media events, or a moderated public forum convened by AERA. The events will be designed to address research issues of significance emanating from the conference.

*Scholarly Book Based on Research Conference:* AERA retains the right of first refusal on any scholarly volumes that might result from the research conference. Proposals that plan for publishable-quality books based on the conference are encouraged. Decisions on book publications rest with the Books Editorial Board. Divisions or SIGs sponsoring research conferences may not independently publish these volumes under their own imprimatur if the Board decides against publication, but the principal investigator(s) may do so as independent scholars.

- If the principal investigator(s) of the conference will produce a scholarly volume based on the conference, he or she should submit a formal prospectus to the AERA Books Editorial Board, in accordance with specified guidelines. Each prospectus needs to contain a statement of purpose, a description of the audience, a listing of competing volumes, an annotated table of contents, and the proposed organizers’/editors’ vitas, as well as addressing other issues as specified in the AERA guidelines for book proposals. If a research conference proposal is selected to
receive an award, the principal investigator(s) will receive additional information on submitting a formal book prospectus, should the awardee(s) choose to do so.

**Proposal Review**

As noted above, the AERA Research Advisory Committee (RAC) reviews conference proposals and makes final decisions on the awards. The Council and staff liaison(s) to the Research Advisory Committee will participate in the review. Announcements of awards are made by the AERA Central Office based on the recommendation of the RAC. A staff member with a background in education research directs this program and also serves as staff liaison to the RAC for this activity. Information about current staffing and membership of the Research Advisory Committee is available [here](#).

Prospective applicants are encouraged to consult with AERA staff for advice on the conference organization and application (e.g., formats or budget allowances). Please direct questions to EdResearchConference@aera.net and you will be contacted by e-mail or telephone.