

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS:**

### ***Empirical Research on Workplace-Related Outcomes of EAPs***

This is the Employee Assistance Research Foundation's second call for proposals. This call will remain open from September 29, 2011, until November 30, 2011.

#### **Purpose of this Call for Proposals**

There is a need for rigorous research on workplace-related outcomes of EAPs. Employers and other stakeholders have a great interest in clarifying the contributions of EAPs to directly relevant outcomes. While there are informative prior studies in this area, additional studies with strong methodology, contemporary EAP settings, and a focus on workplace-specific outcomes will greatly strengthen evidence for the field. Therefore, EARF will support rigorous empirical research that addresses the effects of EAPs, or specific components of EAPs, on workplace-related outcomes including but not limited to:

- Absenteeism
- Presenteeism
- Productivity
- Turnover
- Health care utilization
- Health care costs
- Workplace injuries/accidents
- Workers' compensation

This call for proposals is **not** seeking studies with clinical outcomes (e.g., depression, substance use, anxiety) or satisfaction as the primary outcomes.

EARF is interested in empirical studies that analyze outcomes data for this call for proposals. EARF is seeking studies with strong methodologies including—where appropriate—well-selected control or comparison groups and validated outcomes instruments (or a sound plan for developing new measures). Multi-site studies can be especially valuable, though not necessary. Partnering with employers, EAP providers, and others is encouraged.

### **Total Awards**

The EARF will announce several research grants of up to \$40,000 to support studies for a maximum of one year. The awards are intended to be used as seed money to eventually pursue a larger research endeavor.

### **Two-Stage Proposal Process**

There are two stages in the proposal process:

1. Applicant organizations submit a brief proposal of no more than five double-spaced pages.
2. Upon review of all brief proposals, a subset of applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal and budget for further consideration.

Proposals must be submitted as an email attachment in an MS Word file to EARF's Executive Officer Bob McLean at [bmclean@eapfoundation.org](mailto:bmclean@eapfoundation.org).

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Applicants must be organizations such as a tax-exempt educational institution, agency, or a for-profit business entity such as an LLC. Applicant organizations must also have access to an Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Applicant organizations from countries outside the US or Canada engaged in EAP research are also encouraged to apply. We encourage proposals from diverse disciplines and organizations representing a range of fields and sectors. Partnerships or collaborations between two or more organizations, such as an employer, an EAP firm, and a university or research institute are also invited to apply.

Individuals employed by an applicant organization with the appropriate expertise to conduct the proposed research may apply. The EARF will not fund doctoral dissertations or other graduate student projects at this time.

### **Reviews**

Brief proposals and full proposals are reviewed by an independent and volunteer EARF Grant Committee of researchers selected by the EARF Board. The EARF Grant Committee is unable to provide individual comments on either brief or full proposals. Applicants will be informed of the decision regarding brief proposals by January 13, 2012. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants will need to submit the full proposal by March 15, 2012. Applicants will receive detailed information about full proposal requirements at the time of their invitation to submit.

### **Selection Criteria**

Brief proposals will be reviewed in consideration of the following criteria:

1. Proposals that fit with EARF's priorities and advance EAP research.

2. A clear, effective research plan to implement the proposal.
3. Significance of the proposed research to advance knowledge in the employee assistance field.
4. Innovation in the proposed research ideas, methods, and approach.
5. Feasibility in terms of data access, proposed budget and time line.
6. The applicant's demonstrated research experience and credentials, such as peer-reviewed publications and leadership roles in prior research projects.
7. Examples of any in-kind support or donations that would contribute to the applicant's capacity to carry out the proposed research.
8. Proposals must demonstrate how EARF funding will support specific, discrete research activities and products.

### **Monitoring**

For applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal and ultimately receive an award, the grantee must submit a narrative and financial report at mid-study and at the conclusion of the research (no more than one year after the start-up date). The EARF requires all grantees to communicate research findings by submitting at least one scholarly paper based on the funded research to a peer-reviewed journal during the active grant period. It is expected that at least one paper will be accepted or published within one year following the end of the grant. The EARF must be noted as funding source in the peer-reviewed journal.

### **Use and Disbursement of EARF Funds**

Funds may be used for research staff compensation, approved consultants, data collection and analysis, direct project expenses involving supplies and approved equipment, and approved research related travel. EARF does not cover any indirect costs such as a percent of administrative overhead for staff or personnel not directly involved in the research project. Disbursement of grantee funds will typically be 50% of the award at the beginning of the study, 40% at mid-point (and only after receipt of a mid-study report), and the remaining 10% upon submission of the final report.

### **Institutional Review Board**

Applicants who are asked to submit a Stage 2 full proposal and receive an EARF award must have one of the following:

- Written approval from the submitting organization's Institutional Review Board (IRB) within 90 days of receiving an EARF award and before the research begins,
- The research is declared exempt from IRB review by the submitting organization's IRB or other approved IRB.

If there are costs associated with obtaining IRB review, these should be reflected in the proposed budget.

### **How to Submit the Brief Proposal**

Applicants must prepare a brief proposal of no more than five doubled-spaced pages along with a biography or CV of the Principal Investigator. The biography or CV is not included in the five-page limit. Submit these two documents by email to Bob McLean at

bmclean@eapfoundation.org. For the abstracts/brief proposals use Times Roman or Arial 11-point type, with one-inch margins on 8 1/2" x 11" paper.

The brief proposal must include the following numbered sections:

1. Identification and contact detail for the sponsoring organization (does not count toward the 5-page limit)
2. Specific aims of the research or hypotheses
3. Potential significance or implications for the field
4. Research methods (including: research sites or data sources, study population and sample, research design, data analysis plan)
5. Estimated grant budget request (in US dollars), showing subtotals for personnel, data purchase, supplies/equipment, travel, and other costs. No indirect costs are allowed.

The final date for submitting a brief proposal under this call for proposals is November 30, 2011.

### **Contact Information**

If you have questions about the application process, contact Executive Officer Bob McLean by phone (703-416-0060) or email ([bmclean@eapfoundation.org](mailto:bmclean@eapfoundation.org)).