SOCIETY FOR THE STUDY OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY
SHAPIRO MID-CAREER RESEARCH AWARD (MCRA),
Request for Applications

GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

Proposal Deadline: November 1st, 2025 11:59 PM EST

The Society for the Study of School Psychology Shapiro Mid-Career Grant Awards (MCRA) was designed to promote excellence in research for mid-career researchers in school psychology. The MCRA's primary purpose is to facilitate the award of large-scale extramural research funding (> $100,00 per year) by a successful mid-career professional, with mentorship by one or more senior scholars and other types of support. Although not all quality MCRA applications submitted can be funded, each applicant will receive constructive feedback to guide future submissions.

The purpose of SSSP funded research as stated in the bylaws of SSSP are to:
1. Advance basic and applied scientific research in all aspects of school psychology;
2. Disseminate important research results concerning school psychology to the general public, scientists, academicians, and practitioners; and
3. Foster communication about the profession of school psychology.

Award Program Eligibility:
- Between 2- and 10-years post-tenure and currently at the rank of Associate Professor or equivalent. Eligible individuals not in an academic position or in a non-tenure track position, would be those who are at an equivalent number of years post-degree, usually between 5-15 years post-doctoral degree.
- Evidence of an existing or emerging program of school psychology research that, with additional mentorship, holds promise to meet the funding expectations and requirements of large extramural funding sources, such as federal agencies or national foundations.
- Evidence of success in obtaining small scale funding (< $100,000 per year) for prior or ongoing research projects.

General Guidelines for MCRA Applications:
- MCRA applications should describe the applicant's research program and plans for submitting for and obtaining future research funding, with the support of a mentor.
- Specific components required for the MCRA application are described in detail below and include the following sections: Description of Research Program, Key Publications, Future Research Agenda, External Funding Efforts, Future External Funding Plans, Senior Scholar Mentor, Mentorship Plan, and Budget, with the applicant's vita and mentor support letter(s) attached to the application.

- MCRA applications generally should be 10 pages or less, not including vita and support letters. See "APPLICATION FOR SHAPIRO MID-CAREER RESEARCH INITIATIVE."
- MCRA applications should be consistent with professional codes of ethics (i.e., APA, NASP, American Academy of Pediatrics [AAP]).
- Any member of the research team (i.e., PI, consultants, mentor) who has a real or potential conflict of interest (COI) must submit a COI management plan with the MCRA application. The COI management plan is not subject to the MCRA application page limits.

Application Process

***Budgetary Guidelines*.** As applicants develop their proposals, they should keep in mind the following budgetary guidelines: Funding from the SSSP for the MCRA may be used for reimbursement of travel expenses and direct expenses. Reimbursable travel expenses may include travel expenses for the mentor or the MCRA scholar for a face-face meeting to support grant preparation, or for both to meet during a sponsored, national event once each year at APA, CDSPP, or NASP. Direct expenses may include expenses incurred in the preparation of the proposal for national funding. Examples of direct expenses may include, but are not limited to, stipends for research assistants to conduct pilot studies, statistical consulting, research incentives to participants for pilot studies that are referenced in the MCRA application, stipends for editorial assistants to edit project proposals, or other reasonable costs specified by the applicant as relevant to crafting their proposal. Consistent with SSSP policy, capital expenses (e.g., purchase of computers, software, or other hardware) and indirect costs/overhead are not reimbursable (see SSSP website). A maximum award of up to $4,000 for the first year and up to $4,000 for a second year (if a second year is approved) is possible.

Potential for a Second Year of SSSP Funding. To apply for second year funding, by the end of the first year the Shapiro Mid-Career Scholar should submit documentation to the Director of Research (dirofresearch.sssp@gmail.com) that confirms that the awardee has submitted a grant proposal with the support of the mentor to a federal agency or foundation that exceeds $100,000 per year in (1) direct costs and (2) with external funding to be determined by a peer review process. A copy of the submitted grant and proof of submission *must* be sent to the Director of Research at least 30 days prior to the end of the funding period for a second funding year to be considered. If the application for a second year of SSSP funding meets the two criteria listed above, then the Director of Research, after consulting with the Board, may authorize a second year of funding for the scholar and mentor.

Evaluation Criteria
Every application will have to meet the following eligibility criteria:
- Availability and willingness of appropriate senior scholar(s)
- Evidence of progress toward obtaining a large grant (> $100,000 per year)
- Evidence of an existing or emerging program of research relevant to school psychology that, with additional mentorship provided by a senior scholar, holds promise to meet the funding expectations and requirements of federal agencies or foundations.

All eligible applications will be scored on the following:
- Area of research is well defined and reflected in the applicant's scholarly activity.
- The area of research is likely to be viewed favorably by federal funders (e.g., NIH, IES, NSF) or foundations.
- There is one or more available mentor(s) who have committed to mentoring the applicant.
- Proposed expenses are consistent with the SSSP guidelines.

Submission Instructions and Notification of Awards
- Applications are due by **November 1st, 2025**.
- Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by **December 15, 2025.**
- The length of award will be one year with an additional year available pending approval by Director of Research (see above). The start date will be **February 1, 2026.** The complete application should be converted to a single pdf file with the sections organized in the order listed in the attached application and emailed to r.volpe@northeastern.edu by **11:59 PM Eastern Time November 1, 2025**. The file should be labeled with the applicant's name, followed by the mentor's name and the date (e.g., Doe_Beckman_11-1-2025.pdf).

Review and Award Procedures
Awards are made once each calendar year. The MCRA Proposal Review Committee, appointed by the President of SSSP with the approval of the SSSP Executive Board, reviews all proposals. In the event of a potential conflict of interest in the evaluation process, the Committee member who has such a conflict will not participate in the scoring process for that application. The initial process will include the review of all proposals by at least two members of the Review Committee; based on these reviews, the top-ranked proposals will be reviewed, discussed, and voted on by the full Review Committee, which will make recommendations regarding funding to the SSSP Board. Final approval will be made by the SSSP Board. Applicants can expect feedback concerning proposals by December 15, 2025. The initial grant will be for a period of one year, extending from February 1, 2026 - January 31, 2027. A second grant year (if approved) will extend from February 1, 2027 - January 31, 2028.

MCRA award recipients are required to send a report (by January 31 each year, and 6 months following conclusion of the entire project) to the Director of Research (dirofresearch.sssp@gmail.com) describing activities, progress, and expenditures during the year. Successful applicants will be expected to acknowledge funding by the SSSP in any

publications or presentations of the results of the research supported by the grant. Successful applicants are encouraged to consider publication in the *Journal of School Psychology*.

Chair of Shapiro Mid-Career Awards Selection Committee is Robert J. Volpe, email: r.volpe@northeastern.edu

APPLICATION FOR SHAPIRO MID-CAREER RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Applicant Name:

Current Rank:

Years Post Degree:

Years Post Tenure

Current Institutional Affiliation:

Mailing Address:

Email Contact Information:

Phone:

Description of Research Program. Describe the content of your current research program for which you believe external funding would be possible (no more than 1000 words)

Key Publications. What key publications have emerged from that research program?

Future Research Agenda. Describe your future research agenda for this area, including specific projects that could lead to successful external funding and your plans for pilot and other studies, as applicable.

External Funding Efforts. Describe your past and current efforts in proposing and securing external funding for your research program. Include evidence of your success in obtaining at least local, state, or other external funding for prior or ongoing research projects. Provide support that you have not obtained external funding for projects budgeted at $100,000 or greater per year.

Future External Funding Plans: Describe your planned activities to submit proposals and obtain federal/national external funding, including potential funding agencies and a rationale that your research is likely to meet funding goals for these agencies. Describe supports that you will use for developing successful grant proposals, including editorial assistance, statistical consultation, etc. Include any evidence of your progress toward obtaining a large grant.

Senior Scholar Mentor. Identify one or two senior scholars in school psychology who have agreed to serve as your mentor and briefly describe why the senior scholar(s) will be a relevant mentor to assist you with external funding proposals. Your mentor(s) does not need to be an SSSP member, SSSP, cannot be at the same institution as the applicant, and cannot be your

graduate advisor or dissertation chair. Please note, that the senior scholar(s) should have a proven track record of funded research.

Mentorship Plan. Describe a mentorship plan that you and your mentor have developed. The plan should include how the mentor will work with the applicant to prepare and submit a grant proposal. Mentorship activities typically include brainstorming research questions and design considerations, reading drafts of funding proposals, preparation of presentations and/or manuscripts, and may include meetings at the mentor's or awardee's institution, and a sponsored national event (APA, NASP or CDSPP). In-person meetings are encouraged, and virtual communication is also permissible.

Budget. Include a detailed, itemized budget for your use of MCRA funds, including a rationale for how the funds will assist you in submitting and obtaining grants and other external funding. See the above section, "Award Funding" for types of activities that may be considered for MCRA funding, including pilot projects, research assistants, research incentives, editorial assistance, statistical consulting, etc. The budget must be consistent with SSSP guidelines.

Attach the following: (A) your current full curriculum vitae and (B) a letter of support from your mentor(s).

Send to: Chair of Shapiro Mid-Career Awards Selection Committee: Robert J. Volpe, email: r.volpe@northeastern.edu