

2020 Research-Practice Partnership Research Scholars Program Announcement

The goal of the Research-Practice Partnership Research Scholars Program is to advance the skills and expand the pipeline of emerging researchers to conduct studies in strong partnership with early care and education settings, with a particular emphasis on Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs and the children and families served by MSHS programs. This includes research scholars pursuing research on diversity, disparities, and equity, as well as scholars from historically underrepresented populations. This effort is funded through a Spencer Foundation [Research-Practice Partnership grant](#) awarded to NORC at the University of Chicago, and its partners The Catholic University of America and the National Migrant Seasonal Head Start Association (NMSHSA). By actively engaging with the study team in examining data from the nationally-representative Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Study, the Research Scholar will contribute to the grant's goal of partnering with the MSHS program community to inform programs, policies, and services in promotion of the social and economic well-being of MSHS children and families.

2020 CALL FOR APPLICATIONS:

[NORC at the University of Chicago and the Research-Practice Partnership team](#) invites advanced doctoral students, postdocs, and early career scholars to submit applications for the Research Scholar Program. One research scholar will be awarded to collaborate on research with Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) programs, on topics that include, but are not limited to the MSHS Study's primary research questions:

- (1) What are the characteristics of MSHS programs, centers, staff, families, and children?
- (2) What services does MSHS provide, and what are the instructional practices and general classroom quality of MSHS classrooms?
- (3) What are the associations between MSHS characteristics and child/family well-being?

Program Description/Program Goals

1. Work in partnership with the Research-Practice Partnership study team to conduct analyses to inform MSHS programs, policies, and practices.

The research scholar will work remotely for approximately one day a week over the course of a year on a project developed in close and mentored collaboration with the Research-Practice Partnership study team and MSHS programmatic stakeholders. The research scholar will develop a project that leverages data from the national Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Study to address policy and/or programmatically relevant questions that are responsive to the needs of the MSHS families and programs, and which are aligned with the national study's primary research questions.

Interested applicants are encouraged to learn more about the MSHS study from the following links:

- [Overview of the MSHS Study and publications](#)
- [Information on the MSHS Study data](#)

2. Train and support the next generation of diverse early care and education diverse scholars with mentorship from leading scholars in the field.

Mentorship: The research scholar will work in collaboration with the full study team and under weekly mentoring guidance of one of the Co-Principal Investigators, [Dr. Michael López](#). The scholar will also receive support and mentorship from other team members on research activities and to further support their overall professional development goals.

3. Foster the exchange of current ideas, research, and information through dissemination efforts targeting program practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

Collaboration and Networking: The scholar will participate in biweekly calls with the project's team leadership and will have the opportunity to share their proposed work for feedback from the project team. Activities will include participation in the project's research infrastructure activities, such as stakeholder engagement, efforts related to the creation of the online interactive data tool, creating and providing trainings/webinars to support research accessibility for the MSHS community and key stakeholders, conference panels, mentoring and networking activities, and training in social media, accessible writing, and data visualization.

Funding: We anticipate funding for one Research Scholar in 2020. The scholar will receive a **\$10,000** stipend for a **12-month period**, starting in the fall of 2020. The estimated time commitment to program-related activities is approximately one day per week.

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Current enrollment in a doctoral program (those currently in their third year or higher of a Ph.D. program), a postdoc, or an early career scholar (up to 5 years post-Ph.D.).
2. A strong interest in conducting research and/or experience in community engagement and related community-based work to support the development and well-being of low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse children and families participating in early care and education (ECE) settings, particularly MSHS programs.
3. Research and/or professional training and experience related to the study's main research questions.

Application Requirements:

Applications are **due by Midnight ET on Tuesday September 8, 2020**, with the following components:

1. Personal statement (no longer than four single-spaced pages) that describes the applicant's interest and experience relevant to the eligibility criteria listed above (described in the eligibility criteria)
 - Research experience and relevant background
 - Interest in research concerning low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse children and families enrolled in ECE programs, particularly Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.
 - Relevant research or professional-community experience in one or more of the project's research questions: (1) What are the characteristics of MSHS programs, centers, staff, families, and children? (2) What services does MSHS provide, and what are the instructional practices and general classroom quality of MSHS classrooms? (3) What are the associations between MSHS characteristics and child/family well-being? Interest in the goals of the Research-Practice Partnership Research Scholars Program and relevant educational and professional development goals.

2. Current resume or curriculum vitae (CV) providing information about the applicant's educational background, publications, presentations, and any professional experience relevant to project.
3. One to two letters of recommendation addressing:
 - The applicant's relevant background and qualifications, including training and research experience.
 - Professional development goals, interests or needs pertinent to the goals of the Program.

One letter should be from their advisor/supervisor with verification of the student's year level, or postdoc/current position, and willingness to provide the necessary addition support and mentorship for the applicant's efforts from their local institution.

Submit the personal statement and resume/CV as a single PDF to MSHS-Research-Practice-Partnership@norc.org. Recommendation letters can be included as part of the application or can be emailed directly by recommenders.

Please email questions to MSHS-Research-Practice-Partnership@norc.org with "**Research-Practice Partnership Research Scholars Program**" in the subject line.

We strongly encourage scholars from populations historically underrepresented in the research and academic fields (e.g., those from Hispanic or minority backgrounds, first-generation graduate students) and those from Hispanic-serving institutions (HSIs) to apply.

Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be evaluated according to the following evaluation criteria:

1. Research and/or experience in community engagement and related community-based work with specific focus on low-income, culturally and linguistically diverse children and families enrolled in ECE programs, particularly Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.
2. Professional development goals and the extent to which the Research Scholar Program is expected to advance those goals.
3. Overall writing quality and organization of the application.
4. Letters of recommendation (and their assessment of the applicant's research background, interests and experiences, pursuits and accomplishments thus far, and professional development goals).
 - a. Determination that the applicant is either (a) an advanced doctoral student in good standing, (b) a postdoc, or (c) an early career scholar (as evidenced by the number of years since graduation).

Applications will be reviewed and final applicants will be invited to engage in a phone interview with the study team. The chosen applicant will be notified by **October 5th, 2020**.

Contact information and questions

For additional program information you may visit the [MSHS Research-Practice Partnership project Webpage](#) or contact us at MSHS-Research-Practice-Partnership@norc.org. No phone calls, please.