

Request for Proposals
Competition to Conduct Analysis of HUD's Randomized Evaluation Data
Moving to Opportunity and Family Options Studies

HUD announces a competition for access to data from two of the most important randomized social experiments ever conducted, the Moving to Opportunity for Fair Housing (MTO) demonstration and the Family Options Study (FOS). HUD has partnered with the U.S. Census Bureau to make the experimental data more available to qualified researchers and more readily matched with other administrative data. By making these data more accessible to qualified researchers, HUD expects to continue the process of evidence building using MTO experimental data to assess the impact of neighborhoods on the lives of low-income families with children and using Family Options experimental data to assess housing and services interventions for families with children experiencing homelessness.

This request for proposal marks the start of what we hope will be a long-term relationship with the U.S. Census Bureau to make data from HUD-sponsored randomized social experiments available to researchers for ongoing evidence-building efforts.

HUD and the U.S. Census Bureau program and/or research staff will review each proposal with up to three winners being announced in December 2018. For each winner, HUD and Census will cover all project costs for the first year of the project, *exclusive of the cost to access a Federal Research Data Center (RDC)*. Included in the award are the cost to obtain special sworn status for researchers; to draft, route, and review the project agreement; to ingest, process, and provision any outside data; to provide technical and administrative assistance during the analyses, and to assist with disclosure review for the final analyses. The estimated value of the prize is \$30,000.

Note: A list of other currently available data within the U.S. Census Bureau's Data Inventory are available here.

<https://www2.census.gov/about/linkage/data-file-inventory.pdf>

<https://www.census.gov/ces/dataproducts/demographicdata.html>

<https://www.census.gov/ces/dataproducts/economicdata.html>

Overview (Background)

HUD and the Census Bureau entered into an Inter-Agency Agreement (IAA) to make selected randomized evaluation datasets from HUD-sponsored evaluations available to qualified researchers via the Census Bureau's [Economic Reimbursable Surveys](#)

[Division](#). Approved projects can access the datasets at one of 28 [Federal Statistical Research Data Centers \(FSRDC's\)](#). Researchers working on approved projects must obtain Special Sworn Status (SSS) with the Census Bureau.

The first datasets being made available were collected as part of randomized evaluations – Moving to Opportunity and Housing and Services Options for Homeless Families (hereafter Family Options Study).

[Moving to Opportunity \(MTO\)](#) ran from 1994 to 1998 and involved 4,600 families from high-poverty public housing projects in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York. These families were randomly assigned to one of three groups: those who received a housing voucher that they could use only in low-poverty neighborhoods, those who received a housing voucher without that limitation, or those who could continue to live in public housing. Participating families were tracked directly through 2010, and researchers have conducted some matching exercises from later data. The power of the experimental design permits researchers to derive the impact of neighborhood on the lives of low-income families with children without bias from self-selection or other omitted variables.

[Family Options \(FOS\)](#) was a multi-site random assignment experiment designed to understand which housing and services interventions work best for families with children experiencing homelessness and learn whether certain types of families benefit more or less from different interventions. Between 2010 and 2012, a total of 2,282 families in 12 communities nationwide, including more than 5,000 children, were recruited for the study after staying at least 1 week in emergency shelter. Families were randomly assigned to one of four possible interventions that differed in the duration of housing assistance provided or in the intensity of social services offered: (a) a long-term deep housing subsidy, usually in the form of a housing choice voucher, with no specialized services; (b) community based rapid re-housing, which is temporary rental assistance for up to 18 months with limited housing-related services; (c) project-based transitional housing, which is temporary housing for up to 24 months in an agency-controlled building coupled with intensive supportive services; and d) usual care, which was whatever mix of housing and services that homeless families could obtain on their own outside of the demonstration.

Eligibility

Proposals are being accepted from non-profit policy or research organizations and persons affiliated with a policy or research organization who have demonstrated experience and expertise conducting and completing rigorous policy research and evaluation using social and behavioral science data. (Note: Government, academic, non-profit, and not-for-profit organizations are eligible.) Additionally, any person on an approved project who will be entering the Census Bureau's secure environment to look at or work with restricted data must obtain SSS with the Census Bureau. The Census

Bureau gives SSS to individuals to conduct work that specifically benefits a Census Bureau program. SSS individuals are sworn for life to protect the data as Census Bureau employees are sworn, and they are subject to the same legal obligations and penalties. Users must also adhere to relevant ethics, confidentiality, and privacy protection procedures. Thus, applicants must have at least one person on their team who will be able to meet the requirements for being granted SSS by the Census Bureau for carrying out the proposed research project.

As a researcher with SSS, you will be given restricted access to either the Moving to Opportunity and/or the Family Options Study with the expectation that you fully perform the tasks outlined in your proposal. SSS is authorized by Title 13 U.S.C. 23 (c) — to assist the Bureau of the Census in performing the work authorized by this title. Under this title, SSS researchers must adhere to all Census Bureau security and data stewardship standards and the data may only be used for statistical purposes. That is, data you will have access to for statistical purposes may not be used to make decisions regarding a specific individual, housing authority, housing provider, or business.

NOTE: The discretionary authority to swear in researchers with SSS rests with the Census Bureau.

Deliverable (Submission of Proposal)

In general, each proposal should clearly describe the organization's and/or researcher's experience performing the proposed scope of work; the analysis plan and methodology for performing the proposed scope of work; and the proposed research outputs. The proposal should not exceed 10 pages.

Each proposal will be assessed by HUD program and/or research staff and depending on the scope of the proposed project may involve staff from other federal agencies with research interests aligned to the topic(s) proposed.

At a minimum, each proposal should include:

- The HUD dataset for which access is requested (one HUD study dataset per submission)
- Analysis Plan.
 - The applicant must include an analysis plan for the project that is reasonable to undertake the work. The narrative should present a clear, practical, and forward-looking plan to fully perform the tasks outlined in the proposal.
- Research and Development Design.
 - The applicant must include a preliminary research and development design that specifically addresses this project.
 - The applicant must include a brief description of the research literature and the contribution of the proposed project.

- The applicant must include the research question(s) being considered.
- The applicant must include the types of analysis being considered and other datasets that will be linked/used in the analysis. (See appendix for administrative data listings and other restricted data held at the Census Bureau. Contact ADRM.data-linkage@census.gov for more information about the content of datasets. A researcher may also choose to bring data into the Census Bureau for linking with HUD's MTO or FOS evaluation data. However, the researcher bears the additional administrative costs for preparing such data for linking purposes.
- The applicant must identify the Federal Statistical Research Data Center (RDC) where the researcher plans to access the MTO or FOS evaluation data.
- Organizational Capacity and Experience and Key Personnel.
 - Recent Experience and Performance - The applicant must include a summary of relevant, recent experience and performance. HUD will evaluate your organization's past performance based on your descriptions of other recent (within the past 5 years) research or data projects comparable in scope and complexity to the proposed work. (Note: Supporting documents should be included in an appendix.)
 - Key Personnel - The applicant must include a summary of key personnel. For the purposes of responding to this sub-factor, 'key personnel' is defined as the applicant's proposed research team. Applicants should include in their proposed research and development team people with expertise in applied research, project management, data management, statistics (including econometrics), and writing and editing. (Note: Resumes/CVs should be included in an appendix.)
- Performance Evaluation.
 - The applicant must describe the general methods and measures it will use to regularly monitor progress in performance of proposed analyses.

Proposal Submittal

The application deadline is 11:59:59 p.m. Eastern time on November 2, 2018. Proposals and subsequent amendments must be received no later than the deadline.

Submit your proposal to ERD.Data-Linkage@Census.gov

HUD Contact: Christopher.J.Narducci@hud.gov