



# Reissue of R25 Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies and Approaches in the Behavioral and Social Sciences.

Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research  
National Institutes of Health

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# OBSSR

- ▶ **Concept Clearance: Reissue (RFA OD-19-012)**
- ▶ **Title: *Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies and Approaches in the Behavioral and Social Sciences* (Mechanism R25)**
- ▶ **Objective/Purpose :** *To support educational activities that develop cross-cutting methodologies and analytics that are needed to rapidly advance behavioral and social science and that are not already well-addressed by existing educational programs widely available to the research community.*
- ▶ **Funds Available and Anticipated Number of Awards:** Contingent upon NIH appropriations and submissions of meritorious awards. Historically, OBSSR has funded 8-10 with each RFA.
- ▶ **Award Project Period:** 4 years
- ▶ **Council Action:** Vote for continued support of *Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies and Approaches in the Behavioral and Social Sciences*



# Background

- ▶ First issued in 2013 (RFA OD-13-009): *Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies in the Behavioral and Social Sciences (R25)*.
- ▶ Reissued in 2019 (RFA OD-19-012): *Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies and Approaches in the Behavioral and Social Sciences (R25)*
- ▶ This program
  - ◆ intends to fill gaps in behavioral and social science (BSS) education not provided by most standard academic programs.
  - ◆ encourages integration of BSS and non-BSS sciences to reach as broad an audience as possible.
- ▶ Target population: choice of the applicant but is typically all career stages starting in graduate school.



# Purpose

- ▶ This initiative provides four-year support for the development of educational opportunities for skills development.
- ▶ Courses are offered at least once each of the four years of funding.
- ▶ Courses address topics not commonly offered in typical academic environments. Possible educational topics include, but are not limited to:
  - ◆ Neuroimaging methods related to BSS
  - ◆ Approaches to make better use of big data
  - ◆ Open science paradigms for BSS
  - ◆ Computational approaches for multilevel data
  - ◆ Approaches for translating basic BSS into the development and testing of prevention and intervention programs.
- ▶ Program faculty: Mentors are encouraged to be from diverse backgrounds; should have expertise and experience relevant to the proposed program; and must be committed to continue their involvement throughout the total period of the award.
- ▶ In 2019, application budgets were limited to \$200,000 direct costs/year.



# Progress and Impacts

- ▶ 2013: 8 awards were made
  - ◆ Topics: Causal analysis, mixed methods, community-based participatory research, dynamic systems modeling, power analysis for multilevel and longitudinal studies, mHealth
  - ◆ All have made improvements to the courses over time in response to changing needs.
  - ◆ See accompanying document for more information on the courses.
- ▶ 2019: 10 awards were made
  - ◆ Topics: mHealth, causal analysis, community-based participatory research, dissemination and implementation, randomized control trials, intervention optimization
  - ◆ Difficult to report on progress as awards were made Fall 2019, and COVID pandemic began before first courses were to be held.



# Examples

- ▶ A causal analysis course has taught an average of 90 students a year, with 53 unique faculty.
- ▶ An epidemiology/public health program has taught 19 courses with online options. Continued interactions among students and staff were facilitated post-course. In 2017 alone the course had participants from 29 different countries.
- ▶ A mobile health (mHealth) course integrates team science principles and reaches 175-213 participants per year. The course is available in an online forum that in three years logged 66,560 page views from more than 14,000 users from 140 countries.
- ▶ A program on power calculations in multilevel and longitudinal studies takes the course to interested institutions rather than having the students come to them. The three-day course is also offered entirely online, with an accompanying course book developed by the investigators. Within the first three years, scientists from more than 100 specialties had attended the course.



# Concept Clearance

Continue support for

*Short Courses on Innovative Methodologies and Approaches in the Behavioral and Social Sciences (R25)*

