

CHESS Survey Research Fund Proposal Guidelines Pilot Year 2026–2027

Faculty across multiple departments in the College of Humanities & Earth and Social Sciences (CHESS) use online participant recruitment platforms to conduct high-quality survey research. As a pilot program for 2026-27, the CHESS Survey Research Fund supports faculty surveys by providing centrally managed [CloudResearch Connect](#) credits. The program aims to expand access to survey research resources, promote methodological rigor through peer review, and foster interdisciplinary collaboration.

Proposals for funding through the CHESS Survey Research Fund are due by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2026. Proposals must follow the guidelines below and be submitted via [this form](#). If credits are still available after this round, another cycle of applications will be solicited in Spring 2027. Researchers who receive funding through this program should plan to use their CloudResearch Connect credits by May 31, 2027.

Eligibility

Support through the CHESS Survey Research Fund is available to all full-time CHESS faculty with research expectations in their workloads. Projects must involve online survey data collection that can be conducted using a sample recruited through CloudResearch Connect. Interdisciplinary projects are encouraged.

Researcher responsibilities

Faculty researchers are responsible for:

- Obtaining IRB approval prior to data collection;
- Programming and testing the survey in Qualtrics or similar platform; and
- Specifying sampling and pricing parameters, including:
 - Target sample size,
 - Quotas or demographic screens,
 - Compensation rate per respondent,
 - Any additional platform-level requirements.

CHESS faculty can use single sign-on with their [@charlotte.edu](#) address to log into [CloudResearch Connect](#). All data will be collected directly through the researcher's Qualtrics account. CHESS will not access or store any survey data.

Proposal materials

The complete proposal should be uploaded to the [submission form](#) as a single file in PDF format. Unless otherwise specified, all pages should be double spaced with 1" margins and 12-point font. Each proposal should include the following components:

1. Project description (max. 3 pages): Use clear, accessible language that avoids specialized jargon and can be readily understood by reviewers from other disciplines. The project description should address the following elements:
 - a. Research merit: Provide a concise, accessible description of the project, including the research question(s) to be addressed, the scholarly significance of the project, and its contribution to knowledge in the field.
 - b. Survey design: Describe the proposed methodology, including survey objectives and how they relate to the research goals, key measures or constructs to be examined, the proposed sampling strategy, and the anticipated sample size and justification.
 - c. Project readiness: Demonstrate that the project can be successfully completed during the award period by describing the current status of survey development, IRB status and anticipated timeline, and any prior experience or resources that support successful completion of the project.
 - d. Broader value: Briefly explain how the project aligns with the goals of the CHESS Survey Research Fund, including any potential to support interdisciplinary collaboration, generate data that may be useful beyond a single project, or build survey research capacity.
2. Budget request: Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate cost-conscious use of CHESS Survey Research Fund resources while ensuring adequate statistical power and data quality. Applicants should provide a detailed budget using estimates generated through the CloudResearch Connect cost tool (see instructions [here](#)), including:
 - a. Number of participants;
 - b. Payment per participant (based on length of survey in minutes);
 - c. Targeting criteria and quotas, if applicable (plus any associated costs);
 - d. CloudResearch platform costs (25%);
 - e. Total number of credits (in dollars) requested;
 - f. Brief justification for sample size and budget assumptions.
3. Appendix (optional but strongly encouraged): Applicants may include supporting materials that do not count toward the 3-page project description limit, such as:
 - a. Draft survey questionnaire or key survey items.
 - b. Screening questions.
 - c. Recruitment language.
 - d. Experimental vignettes or treatments.
 - e. Additional methodological details.
 - f. Brief (2-page) biographical sketches for members of the research team.

Review process

Proposals will be reviewed by a committee of experienced survey researchers from different CHESS departments using the scoring rubric below. The committee's scores will be shared with the Dean with funding recommendations. Revisions may be requested before funding decisions.

Scoring rubric

Category	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs improvement	Score
Research merit	Research question is clear, significant, and strongly motivated. 25 points	Research question is generally clear and worthwhile, but significance or motivation could be strengthened. 15 points	Research question lacks clarity, significance, or adequate justification. 5 points	Max. 25
Survey design	Survey design is well aligned with research goals, instrument quality is high, and any pre-testing is adequate. 25 points	Survey design is generally appropriate but has some weaknesses in alignment, measurement, or testing. 15 points	Survey design is poorly aligned with objectives or lacks evidence of quality and testing. 5 points	Max. 25
Sampling methodology	Sampling strategy is appropriate, sample size is justified, and recruitment criteria are well defined. 20 points	Sampling methodology is generally sound but requires additional justification or refinement. 12 points	Methodological weaknesses raise concerns about the validity of the study. 4 points	Max. 20
Feasibility and readiness	Project is ready to launch, timeline is realistic, and IRB plans are well developed. 15 points	Project appears feasible but requires additional preparation or clarification. 9 points	Significant concerns exist regarding readiness, timeline, or IRB preparation. 3 points	Max. 15
Budget and cost efficiency	Budget is well justified, compensation is appropriate, and resources will be used efficiently. 10 points	Budget is generally reasonable but includes some questionable or insufficiently justified costs. 6 points	Budget appears inefficient or inadequately justified. 2 points	Max. 10

Broader value to CHESS	Strong potential to foster interdisciplinary collaboration, benefit multiple projects, and/or contribute to CHESS research capacity. 5 points	Some broader value to CHESS, but impact is limited. 3 points	Little evidence of broader value beyond the individual project. 1 point	Max. 5
TOTAL SCORE (max. 100)				

Post-award expectations

Within three months of completing a funded survey, recipients should submit to CHESS Research (chess-research@charlotte.edu) a brief summary of their results and an update on progress toward publication. Failure to submit this report will result in ineligibility for future support from the CHESS Survey Research Fund. Please acknowledge support from the College of Humanities & Earth and Social Sciences in any resulting publications.