Yankelovich Faculty Research Pilot Grants

The Yankelovich Center seeks applications from UC San Diego Social Science faculty interested in developing major research programs aimed at addressing pressing social problems in the United States. The Center will not only provide substantial financial support, but will also offer assistance to help awardees develop research-practice partnerships, seek extramural funding, and disseminate their work to a broader public audience.

To help faculty develop impactful research programs and test solutions to society's pressing problems, the Center will allocate up to $180,000 for up to three Pilot Grants of $50,000-$75,000 each in 2027.

Pilot Grant Application

Who can apply?

Grants will be open to all social science faculty at UCSD. Projects may also include researchers in other divisions at UCSD or at other universities or research institutions.

Criteria on which proposals will be judged

1. Focus on impactful solutions. Projects should aim to make a significant impact on pressing social problems in the United States. Projects will be evaluated both on their ability to discover or verify one or more feasible solutions as well as on their plans to actively engage with policy makers or to partner with practitioners on the ground. According to the Center's bylaws, "The project should aim to discover or verify one or more practical and feasible solutions that promise to make a significant and timely impact on an urgent and important national problem. This criterion is of overriding importance."

2. Quality of the proposed research, including the appropriateness of the design and methods to be used as well as the feasibility of the proposed reform plans. Research designs should be rigorous and clearly explained.

3. Proposals that indicate a partner, or written expression of interest in the study, from government institutions (local, state, and/or federal), schools, nonprofits, and/or business organizations will receive special consideration.

4. Our grants are intended to fund the initial stages of potentially larger projects with significant prospects for raising extramural funding, including formulating promising hypotheses and gathering preliminary evidence on their potential for making a major impact. Possible funding sources and research capabilities for next steps should be clearly specified in the proposal.

Funding amount. $50,000-$75,000

Requirements

Recipients must spend funds in a timely manner, according to the timeline submitted with the application. Carry-forward requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Funds not spent in a timely manner shall be returned to the Center.

Recipients of grants will agree to write a 1-3 page write-up of results and lessons for policymakers, even if preliminary, for posting on the Yankelovich Center website, due Jan 15, 2028. Where appropriate, recipients may be asked to participate in a briefing regarding their research with relevant audiences in the policymaking or media sectors. Grantees will acknowledge the Yankelovich Center's support in events and communications that flow from the grant.

Proposal content

A. Cover page. Please include the following information:
Grant Type: "Yankelovich Faculty Research Pilot Grants"
Name(s)
Email address(es)
Department(s)
Title of Project
Amount Requested

B. Project description [maximum 3 pages, single-spaced]
1. Description of project and activities that will be supported.
2. Explanation of how this project fits into the faculty member's broader research agenda
3. Description of the project's significance for the field
4. Timeline
5. Subsequent external funding proposals that this project will lead to, specifying viable funding opportunities.

B. Budget and Budget Narrative [maximum 2 pages, single-spaced]
1. Other funding the researcher(s) has/have been awarded for this and other current projects
2. Evidence of financial need (for instance, lack of startup or existing grant resources).
3. Budget narrative
4. Budget
5. Budget timeline

C. A brief description (maximum 100 words) for a general audience of the proposed activity and its impact, to be used in public communication about divisional activities.

Submission deadline. December 15, 2026

How to submit. Email your submission as a pdf document to the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research at yankelovich-grants@ucsd.edu.

Evaluation Process. Yankelovich Center Selection Committee

Yankelovich Partnership-Building Grants

To advance the Yankelovich Center's goal of building sustained and engaged partnerships between research and practitioners, the Center will provide a total of up to $25,000 in funding to create
and to deepen these partnerships. The three funding opportunities are:

- $2,500-$5,000 for a convening of multiple potential research-practice partners organized by one or more faculty members to discuss research needs and opportunities for collaboration. Awardees will contribute a 500-word document that will be part of the "Yankelovich Assessment of Research-Practitioner Needs" series. The partners could be nonprofit organizations, other types of community groups, government entities, other venues for policymaking, or combinations of such groups. This document will be intended to provide interested researchers with information about topics of vital interest to this community of practitioners, opportunities to collaborate, and the name and contact information of lead collaborators at each organization.

- $5,000-$10,000 for a collaborative, community-based project in which a faculty member partners with a nonprofit organization, other type of community group, government entity, other venue for policymaking, or a combination of such groups to study an intervention designed to address a pressing social problem. Recipients of grants will agree to write a 1-3 page write-up of results and lessons, even if preliminary, for posting on the Yankelovich Center website.

- $1,000 for a faculty member *or graduate student* to conduct an in-depth meeting with a potential partner to ascertain this group's research needs and to contribute a 500-word document that will be part of the "Yankelovich Assessment of Research-Practitioner Needs" series. The partner could be a nonprofit organization, another type of community group, a government entity, or another venue for policymaking. This document will be intended to provide interested researchers with information about topics of vital interest to the research partner, opportunities to collaborate, and the name and contact information of a lead collaborator.

Who can apply? Faculty (for convening and project grants) and faculty or graduate students (for partner meetings) at any point in their career in the Division of Social Sciences.

Application requirements

Recipients must spend funds in a timely manner, according to timeline submitted with the application. Carry-forward requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Funds not spent in a timely manner shall be returned to the Center.

A. Cover page. Please include the following information:

Grant Type: "Yankelovich Partnership-Building Grants"
Name(s)
Email address(es)

Department(s)
Title of Project
Amount Requested

B. Maximum one page, single-spaced: Describe the group and/or groups that you will bring together and why creating a partnership could yield a productive engagement. Upon completion of the project, awardees will provide a 500-word document that will be part of the "Yankelovich Assessment of Research-Practitioner Needs" series.

C. Project Timeline, including date of project completion.

Application timeline. The Yankelovich Center will accept applications beginning Dec 1, 2026 2026 and continue to accept them on a rolling basis throughout the academic year until it has committed all funds.

How to submit. Email your submission as a pdf document to the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research at yankelovich-grants@ucsd.edu.

Yankelovich Graduate Research Funding

Yankelovich Graduate Research Funding
To empower graduate students to advance their research agendas, the Yankelovich Center will provide successful graduate student applicants with up to $3,500 each for research-related expenses (usable until January 1, 2028). Funding will be disbursed as a stipend. Proposals can include relationship building with the potential users of research. Up to 15 grants overall will be available for the coming academic year.

Who can apply? PhD students in the Division of Social Sciences who have advanced to candidacy at the time the grant is submitted.

Application Requirements.
Cover Page: Please include the following information:
Name
Email address
Department
Advanced to candidacy date
Name of your dissertation advisor
Email of your dissertation advisor
Title of Project
Amount Requested

[Maximum one page, single-spaced] Describe your research project, your need for funding, the original contribution you will make, and how this will inform or impact real-world practices. If other funds are necessary for the successful execution of this project, please note the source of those funds and whether they have been committed. Upon completion of the project, awardees will provide a one-page summary of their research accomplishments and its impact to the Center. Due date of report: January 1, 2028.

Submission Timing. Grant applications are due by Deceber 15, 2026.

How to Submit. Email your submission as a pdf document to the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research at yankelovich-grants@ucsd.edu.

Final Reporting: In addition to the one-page summary described above, awardees will also be expected to attend, if they are in San Diego at the time, a spring 2027 event in which each of them will present a lightning talk about their project.

Yankelovich Catalytic Grants

To advance the Yankelovich Center's goal of bringing together academic teams centered in the School of Social Sciences to address pressing social problems, the Center will provide grants of $5,000-$10,000 to help catalyze projects that could lead to successful extramural grants or that could become strong candidates for consideration by other granting programs at UCSD and beyond. The sorts of activities that could be supported by these grants include, but are not limited to:

- A series of research seminars that bring together a diversity of scholars – and potentially a diversity of disciplinary perspectives – that are united by their focus on a related constellation of social problems or inequities.

- A program of deliberative discussions to help clarify the dimensions of a social problem, discuss different approaches to addressing it, and scope out how a research program could make meaningful progress toward resolving it. The Yankelovich Center believes deeply in "the power of lunch."

- A convening of scholars across UC San Diego and potentially across universities to share their expertise, their ideas for socially impactful research, and the potential for collaboration. This convening could include practitioners and potential research partners as well.

- Support for grant development that could help move a collaborative socially impactful project forward.

Who can apply? Faculty at any point in their career in the School of Social Sciences.

Application requirements

Recipients must spend funds in a timely manner, according to timeline submitted with the application. Carry-forward requests will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Funds not spent in a timely manner shall be returned to the Center.

A. Cover page. Please include the following information:

Name(s)
Email address(es)
Department(s)
Title of Project
Amount Requested

B. Maximum one page, single-spaced: Describe your proposal. Make sure to include ways in which it could catalyze collaborative research at UC San Diego to address a pressing social problem or inequity. Upon completion of the project or by January 1, 2028, awardees will submit a one-page report on their activities and the prospects for advancing the research program.

C. Project Timeline, including date of project completion.

Application timeline. The Yankelovich Center will accept applications beginning December 15, 2026 and continue to accept them on a rolling basis throughout the academic year until it has committed all funds.

How to submit. Email your submission as a pdf document to the Yankelovich Center for Social Science Research at yankelovich-grants@ucsd.edu.