



NORC Equity Scholars¹: Call for Applicants

NORC at the University of Chicago seeks graduate students and early career research professionals, including those from historically marginalized or minoritized backgrounds, to participate in a unique mentored research opportunity.

As a NORC Equity Scholar, you will design and conduct a secondary analysis of data from the Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study, a study examining how students' perceptions of math and their own math skills influence their math performance.

This 8-month program starts in November 2023. Applications are due by October 31, 2023.

Program Overview

The Equity Scholars Program supports advanced doctoral students, postdocs, and early career professionals in a rigorous social science research project that will expand their ability to conduct inclusive and equitable (I&E) research, including culturally responsive research and evaluation.

The program provides mentoring and career networking opportunities and supports research aimed at enhancing our understanding of, creating, or assessing interventions, policies, and practices meant to eliminate disparities and reduce inequality in various dimensions. These dimensions include race, ethnicity, national origin, language, color, disability, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, and family structures.

More broadly, the program seeks to expand the pipeline of historically marginalized and minoritized people pursuing careers in social science research.

The program offers a unique opportunity for Equity Scholars to support the [Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study](#), funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Scholars will use an existing dataset from the Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study (see Appendix A) to conduct secondary data analyses to explore the math experiences and mindsets of historically marginalized and/or minoritized youth and teens.

- **Each Equity Scholar will collaborate with NORC researchers** who will guide, refine, and support the scholar's secondary data analysis. Equity Scholars will receive support and mentorship from experts in the Center on Equity Research as well as NORC's Education & Child Development and Statistics & Data Science departments.
- **Equity Scholars will participate in twice-monthly calls with NORC professionals** to share their research designs, plans for data analysis, and findings. Scholars will present findings to NORC's Center on Equity Research and Education & Child Development department, as well as other NORC departments and/or partners.

¹ This announcement is a call for scholars external to NORC to apply to the program.

Program Goals

1. Describe how structures and other societal contexts frame the experiences of historically marginalized and/or minoritized people and groups.
2. Explore strengths within a diversity of communities to promote success and well-being.
3. Identify within-group variation key to enhancing programs and policies within a diversity of communities.
4. Examine how structural racism negatively impacts society, communities, and individuals.

Funding & Timing

Each Equity Scholar will receive a total of **\$8,000** for this **8-month engagement**, starting in November 2023 and ending in June 2024. The estimated time commitment is approximately one day per week.

Eligibility Criteria

NORC will select two research scholars in 2023 to support the Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study. To be eligible, applicants must have:

- Current enrollment in a doctoral program (i.e., students in their third year or higher of a PhD, PsyD, EdD program), or a postdoctoral student, or an early career scholar (up to five years post-doctoral experience).
- A strong documented interest in researching topics related to diversity, disparities, equity, and inclusion.

All qualified applicants are encouraged to apply, including those from historically marginalized and/or minoritized groups (e.g., first-generation graduate students, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students, students with low incomes). Applicants do not need to be U.S. citizens.

Application Requirements

Applications are due by Tuesday, October 31, 2023, by 11:59 P.M. ET.

Applications should include the following clearly labeled components (see [Appendix B](#) for more on application formatting criteria): personal statement, research statement, resume or curriculum vitae, and a letter of recommendation. **Please answer all questions under each section.**

PERSONAL STATEMENT (500 WORDS)

- **Research interests:** Describe your background and interest in research concerning the experiences of historically marginalized and/or minoritized individuals or the evaluation of programs to mitigate bias, disparities, or inequity.
 - How has your background (i.e., culture, race, ethnicity) including any lived experiences with systems of oppression, impacted your research?
 - Why are you interested in pursuing this research?
- **Professional experience:** Describe your research experiences directly related to the research you propose to complete as part of the Equity Scholars Program.
 - What training or experiences do you have that will facilitate your successful completion of this research?
 - What training or experience do you most want to obtain as an Equity Scholar?
- **Professional goals:** Describe your professional goals.
 - Professionally, where do you aim to be in 10 years?
 - How will the Equity Scholars Program help you reach your professional goals?

RESEARCH STATEMENT (500 WORDS)

- **Proposed research description:** Describe how you propose to use the available Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study data to meet an Equity Scholars-focused [program goal](#).
 - How does your proposed research meet the [program goals](#)?
 - What evidence/theory supports the need for your proposed research?
 - How might your proposed research benefit historically marginalized and/or minoritized groups?
 - What are the potential equity-focused social and/or policy implications of your proposed research?
- **Research questions:** Share your clear, concise, and answerable research questions aligned to the program goals.
 - What are your hypotheses for each research question? Why?
- **Analysis plan:** Describe your proposed analysis.
 - What are your proposed analyses of the Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study data?
 - How do your proposed analyses address your stated research questions?
 - Can you complete the proposed analyses within the 7- to 8-month project period?
 - What variables do you plan to include in each of your proposed analyses?
 - Please list variable names and labels from the dataset listed in Appendix A.

RESUME OR CURRICULUM VITAE (3 PAGES)

Current resume or curriculum vitae (CV) containing a short list of your training, publications, presentations, and professional experiences most *relevant* to your proposed research.

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

One letter of recommendation from a current advisor or supervisor addressing:

- Your relevant background and qualifications, including training and research experience.
- Professional development goals, interests, or needs pertinent to the Equity Scholars program.
- Verification of your year level, postdoc, or current position.
- Advisor's or supervisor's willingness to provide you with the necessary support.

Submission

Format your application using the requirements outlined in [Appendix B](#). Submit the research statement, personal statement, resume/CV, and recommendation letter as a **single** PDF attachment via email to NORC-Equity-Scholars-Program@norc.org. Subject: **NORC Equity Scholars 2023**

Submit your application by October 31, 2023, at 11:59 P.M. ET.

Application Review

NORC will evaluate applications according to the criteria in [Appendix C](#). NORC will select final applicants and notify them by **early November 2023**.

Contact Information and Questions

Please email questions to NORC-Equity-Scholars-Program@norc.org with "NORC Equity Scholars 2023" in the subject line. *No phone calls, please.*

NORC's Commitment to Inclusion and Equity

NORC is committed to engaging in culturally responsive methodologies and authentic engagement processes with communities to conduct research that informs practical, evidence-based strategies to reduce inequality at the intersections of race, ethnicity, social class, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, and geographic location.

[Visit NORC's Center on Equity Research](#)

THE NORC EQUITY SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Equity Scholars Program promotes scholars' use of inclusive and equitable research methods, culturally responsive and equitable evaluation, and best-practice methodologies; increasing the use of existing data to address policy-relevant questions on equity and inclusion issues; and expanding the pipeline of emerging scholars using I&E research methods to inform programs, policies, and services. To learn more about NORC Equity Scholars, please contact us at NORC-Equity-Scholars-Program@norc.org.

About NORC at the University of Chicago

NORC at the University of Chicago conducts research and analysis that decision-makers trust. As a nonpartisan research organization and a pioneer in measuring and understanding the world, we have studied almost every aspect of the human experience and every major news event for more than eight decades. Today, we partner with government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world to provide the objectivity and expertise necessary to inform the critical decisions facing society.

Appendix A. Available Dataset

For the 2023 Equity Scholars Program there will be one available dataset.

Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study

To explore the math identity, mindset, and course-taking behaviors of youth (ages 10-12) and teens (ages 13-17), NORC surveyed a nationally representative sample of teens (via the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel). NORC supplemented the AmeriSpeak Teen Panel with an oversampling of Black and Latinx youth and teens, as well as youth and teens from four states including California, Florida, New York, and Texas. Additionally, a subsample of parents was surveyed for insights about how family context may influence youth and teens' math mindsets.

Within the larger study, NORC conducted a case study with a school district in northern New Jersey, which administered the survey to students in grades 4 to 10 and their parents. The survey responses, along with student-level mathematics assessment data, can be analyzed to explore the relationship between the key math mindset constructs and student achievement.

Project Page: [Youth and Teen Math Mindset Study](#)

Available Data Sources:

Main data sources:

- Survey data from a national sample of students grades 4 through 12 (ages 10 through 17), administered via AmeriSpeak, oversampling of Black and Latino/a/x students.
- Survey data from some of the parents of the surveyed students, administered via AmeriSpeak.

Case Study (a state in the northeast) data sources:

- Survey data from students grades 4 through 10 from a school district in the northeast, administered by the district.
- State math assessment data for surveyed students.
- Survey data from some of the parents of these students, administered by the district.

Available Variables:

- Demographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity, age/grade level, socioeconomic status)
- Responses to survey questions about:
 - Experiences in math class – instructional approaches, students' experience, students' degree of participation, their sense of comfort and belonging in math class.
 - Students' math mindset and attitudes about math—attitudes about math, confidence in own math ability, in their ability to improve (fixed vs growth mindset).
 - Access to resources and support, such as tutoring and support from peers, teachers, parents, and others.
 - Students' self-reported math achievement and course-taking (such as plans to take advanced courses).
- For the Case Study students, performance on end-of-year state math assessments.

Appendix B. Application Formatting Requirements

All applications must include the following sections and conform to the space allocations listed below.

Section	
Personal Statement (500 words)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research interests • Professional goals • Professional experience 	
Research Statement (500 words)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project description and research questions • Analysis plan 	
Resume/CV	3 pages
Letter of recommendation	N/A

Use the following when formatting your research and personal statements:

- 12-point Times New Roman or 11-point Arial
- Single spacing
- The style guide commonly used in your field for references and in-text citations (e.g., APA)
- The style guide commonly used in your field for headings and subheadings (e.g., APA)

Appendix C. Application Scoring Criteria

NORC staff will use the following to score all applications.

	Points
Research interests	15
Professional goals	15
Professional experience (based on personal statement and resume/CV)	15
Proposed research description	15
Research questions	15
Analysis plan	15
Overall writing quality and organization of the application	5
Recommender's assessment of the applicant's relevant research background, interests and experiences, pursuits, and accomplishments thus far, and professional development goals	5
Total	100