

# Side effects matter: Centering people's experiences with contraceptive side effects

## 2023 Request for proposals

### Purpose

Side effects are one of the most common reasons why people who are trying to avoid pregnancy report being dissatisfied with or decide to discontinue contraception. Despite the prominence of side effects in people's contraceptive experiences and decision making, people's concerns about and experiences with side effects are often minimized, especially among those whose fertility is problematized within existing systems of oppression.

Recognizing that side effects influence people's willingness and ability to use contraception, there is a need to build on current evidence exploring people's experiences of side effects and the clinical response to people's experiences with side effects. Further research is needed on questions such as:

- How does social location shape people's experience of side effects?
- What factors shape people's tolerance for side effects?
- What are people's expectations about clinical support around side effects?
- What factors shape providers' expectations of people's tolerance for side effects?

In order to explore these and other questions and generate new evidence on how to best support people experiencing contraceptive side effects (through clinical support or other means), the Society of Family Planning is offering the *Side effects matter: Centering people's experiences with contraceptive side effects* request for proposals.

## Research focus

Proposed research must be positioned to produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, or other structures that can support people experiencing contraceptive side effects. Proposed research can explore side effects independent of the clinical interaction or in the context of the clinical interaction. If the latter, note that there are potentially multiple points of interaction with a provider around contraceptive side effects (eg, initial method selection, proactive provider-initiated follow-up after method selection, follow-up about side effects, new method selection). We encourage proposals exploring side effects in the context of the clinical encounter to name clearly a specific point of interaction.

Central to this funding opportunity is the understanding that contraceptive care in the US is not equitable and people's social locations (eg, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, age, health, and geography) shape their contraceptive experiences. As such, proposed research must specifically define and justify the population the research is focused on and bring attention to how social location shapes that population's experience with contraception.

Teams must be attentive to the Society's [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Vision Statement](#) and should seek to uphold [equity-informed principles for contraceptive access research](#) throughout the research process.

## Funds and duration

The Society invites proposals for research studies with budgets up to \$25,000 that can be completed within 18 months of award. Grantees will also have access to funds to support the communication of research findings to target audiences, available upon request during the grant period.

Application submission opens on

**March 23, 2023** and closes **May 29, 2023\***.

Awards will be announced in July and funds will be available for immediate use.

*\*Please note the deadline for proposals has been extended from the initial release of the request for proposals*

## Eligibility

Grants will be made to organizations on behalf of a named principal investigator (PI). Grants are limited, without exception, to tax-exempt organizations. Applicants do not need to be members of the Society. Funding is limited to projects focused on the US.

## Review process

All proposals will undergo peer review using specific criteria. The goal of peer review is to make recommendations for enhancing the research proposal and to identify the projects with the greatest potential impact. The funder of these awards may also be involved in the selection of grants; this helps ensure that the research funded through the Society is one of many strategic components working together to strengthen the family planning sector. We anticipate supporting up to three research projects via this funding opportunity.

All proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria. For more information about the review process, please see the proposal review guide: <https://bit.ly/rg23cse>

### Impact (35%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are positioned to generate empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, or other structures that can support people experiencing contraceptive side effects.

### Methods (35%)

The Society seeks to fund methodologically sound and rigorous projects.

### Study population (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are aligned with the proposed research questions, with a clear justification for a specific population focus and a thoughtful explanation of the social factors shaping that population's experience with contraceptive care.

### Equity (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects that are informed by the [equity principles](#) developed by the [Coalition to Expand Contraceptive Access](#).

### Team (10%)

The Society seeks to fund projects where the team composition is an asset to the project, including teams that bring together individuals with diverse skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives. The Society also prioritizes study teams that elevate the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.

### *Additional review considerations (not scored)*

Reviewers are also asked to provide feedback on the reasonableness of the proposed budget and period of support; however, these factors are not scored.

## Proposal instructions

### 1. Online application form:

Includes contact and demographic information for the PI, institution, and parties responsible for accounts payable and grants management if the project is funded.

### 2. Summary (250 words):

Provide a brief summary of the proposed project. This information may be used in our newsletter, website, and other educational and promotional purposes should the application be funded.

### 3. Proposal narrative (7 to 9 pages):

All proposals should include:

a. **Background:** Describe the issue and justify how the proposed research project will generate data that will produce empirical evidence with a clear, concrete, and strategic path to changes in clinical practice, health service delivery, or other structures that can support people experiencing contraceptive side effects.

b. **Research question(s):** Include the question(s) that will be answered through the proposed project.

c. **Methods:** Describe the research methods that will be used to answer the research question(s) at hand.

d. **Study population:** Describe the specific study population. The study population must align with the research question(s) and be specifically defined and justified with attention to the social factors shaping that population's experience with contraceptive care. Sample size should be based on power calculations or other appropriate methods as determined by the study approach; sample size should account for subgroup analyses as appropriate.

e. **Timeline:** Describe the timeline for conducting research activities. Data collection and analysis must be feasible to complete within 18 months of receiving the award.

f. **Use of research results:** Narrate the target audience(s) with whom you plan to share your research findings, the actions you would like them to take in response to your findings, and the desired outcomes.

g. **Equity principles:** Describe your plans for upholding [equity-informed principles](#) throughout the research project.

h. **Team composition:** Team composition must be an asset to the project, including teams that bring together individuals with diverse skill sets, backgrounds, and perspectives relevant to the proposed project. Elaborate on the expertise and skills of the individuals composing your study team. Describe the positionality (eg, the social and political context that creates your identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status) of the team and its effect on the proposed project's design, feasibility, and impact. Given the size of awards, the Society expects small teams and welcomes the naming of informal collaborators as well as those included in the study budget. Note that the Society prioritizes study teams that elevate the expertise and skills of Black and Indigenous researchers and researchers of color.

i. **References:** Works cited should be listed as an appendix to the proposal; reference page is not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

#### 4. Study team:

List key team members, including contact and demographic information.

#### 5. Budget and budget narrative:

Studies should be \$25,000 or less. The budget narrative must provide sufficient detail to assess feasibility and suitability in the peer review process and must justify the relevance of requested resources to the project's success. Additional secured or requested funds for the proposed project must be named, if applicable. Direct project costs include personnel, research expenses (eg, equipment, supplies, travel, materials), activities related to use of research results, and other related costs. Indirect costs are permitted at no more than 20% of total direct costs. For subcontracts and sub-awards, the budget itself may include the 20% indirect cost charges, but the subcontract total may not be included in the main budget when calculating the overall indirect cost charges. Budget documents should be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

#### 6. Team information:

NIH-style biosketches are encouraged for all established scientists. Professional resumes are encouraged for those whose careers have not focused on research. Team members can submit the format that works best for the individuals on the team; however, each submitted biosketch or resume should not exceed 10 pages in length. These documents must be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

#### 7. Agency/institution's federal 501(c)(3) status determination letter or proof of tax-exempt status:

Proof of the agency/institution's tax-exempt status determination letter must be included as an appendix and is not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative. Documentation should also be included for subcontracts with tax-exempt organizations that exceed 20% of the budget. These documents must be included as an appendix and are not included in the 7 to 9 pages of the proposal narrative.

**Required formatting:** Font size must be at least 11 points and 1.5 line spacing must be used. Please upload as a single PDF file. All grant applications must be submitted electronically through the [online application portal](#).

SFP welcomes the opportunity to provide clarification around or assistance with any components of the application. Please contact [Grants@SocietyFP.org](mailto:Grants@SocietyFP.org).

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