



**Robert M. La Follette
School of Public Affairs**
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Herb Kohl Public Service Research Competition

Year 9 — December 2023

The Herb Kohl Public Service Research Competition has two main goals: to fund innovative public-policy research designed to help solve society's most challenging problems and to make that research available to citizens and public decisionmakers through creative and effective outreach projects.

The competition is open to all La Follette School faculty members, including award winners from previous years. The awards are intended to reflect the rich variety of work undertaken by La Follette faculty and can range from approximately **\$50,000-\$100,000 (2-5 projects)**, depending on the project's ambition.

The competition funds four basic activities:

- Hiring La Follette students as project assistants.
- Collecting original data and/or analyzing existing data.
- Paying salary to faculty members who devote significant time in the summer toward the completion of their Kohl Competition research projects.
- Planning and executing at least one outreach activity designed to further the impact of the research among a nonacademic audience, including interested citizens and public decisionmakers (policymakers).

Outreach

Because these awards are intended to amplify the exposure and influence of La Follette faculty research, the selection committee considers the outreach portion of a Kohl Competition project to be essential. Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about the best way to communicate their research findings to a wide audience. Award winners will have the full support of the La Follette Outreach staff in developing their outreach activities, with the goal of translating research findings into a form that is useful for and interesting to a nonacademic audience.

Target audiences include:

- Policymakers or agency representatives
- Community or advocacy groups
- The general public

Outreach activities could include:

- In-person panel discussions, presentations, or other speaking engagements
- Meetings with policymakers or agency representatives
- Badger Talks (in-person presentations, virtual presentations, or podcasts)
- Media interviews, appearances, or opinion columns
- Off-campus podcasts in your area of interest
- Social media or web campaigns

Outreach materials or assets could include:

- Reports
- Infographics or interactive data visualizations
- Explainer videos
- Webpage design

Before completing your application, please contact Faculty Liaison Tommy Jaime (tjaime@lafollette.wisc.edu) and Anne Oyamada (oyamada@lafollette.wisc.edu) to discuss possible outreach projects and costs associated with your research proposal. All funded faculty members will report back to the selection committee on the success and impact of their research and outreach efforts.

Note that award winners who fail to complete the outreach portion of their Kohl Competition project will not be eligible for future Kohl Competition awards.

Application

Applications must be submitted using our [online application form](#). Applications will be judged on the relevance, importance, and impact of the research and outreach and must include the following:

1. A description of how the proposed funding will help solve a serious problem related to public policy and influence the public-policy debate in Wisconsin and beyond. The description should also include an outreach timeline explaining when and how the outreach activity will be completed. Previous award winners should add a few details about the research and outreach accomplishments made possible by the previous award. Note: The selection committee includes individuals who do not have academic backgrounds, so it's important to write in plain language that is easy for people outside of specialized fields to understand.
2. A completed budget worksheet to ensure accurate estimates of costs.

The selection committee may ask for additional information, hold in-person interviews with some applicants, and modify proposed budgets.

Applications are due on January 12, 2024.

Applications will be reviewed by the selection committee consisting of two La Follette faculty members and one member of the La Follette Board of Visitors. Award winners will be notified in February 2024 and funds will be available in spring 2024.

Additional Notes

Applications from research teams are encouraged, including teams consisting of La Follette faculty affiliates paired with a La Follette faculty member. LFS faculty who have not won research awards in previous years will be prioritized. However, past research award winners are also encouraged to apply, but only if they have successfully completed their research project and executed their outreach activities.

Awards are for approximately two years, and ideally the funds will be spent during this timeframe. Exceptions can be made if there is a reasonable justification.

No funds will be available to buy out La Follette courses or support non-La Follette students.