

---

*The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)*

---

## 2022 Summer Data Challenge

### Frequently Asked Questions

Apply here: <https://manhattanstrategy.com/2022-summer-data-challenge/>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT THE PROGRAM</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Would my research project be a good fit for funding under the program? .....	2
Does DOL have any priority research topics? .....	2
How does the program work? .....	2
Can my research be on topics in the context of other countries? .....	3
What are the required deliverables? .....	3
Can I include some qualitative research to supplement my quantitative research? .....	3
Do I have to submit a public-use data file? .....	4
My study is based on data that cannot be made publicly available. Will I be ineligible if I cannot submit a public-use data file? .....	4
Can I present my research at conferences or publish in journals? .....	4
What is the process for requesting approval for disseminating my research prior to the end of the award, and under what circumstances would the request be denied? .....	4
<b>ABOUT ELIGIBILITY</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Do applicants have to be U.S. citizens? .....	5
Is this program only for emerging researchers? .....	5
Is there a limit on the number of applications an applicant can submit? .....	5
What documents do I need to submit? .....	5
How will the proposals be assessed? .....	5
<b>ABOUT THE BUDGET</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Can I use program money to fund a research assistant or team? If yes, how should we report this in the budget estimate? .....	6
Can applicants include indirect costs in their budget proposals? .....	6
What is not covered by the award? .....	6

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

### Would my research project be a good fit for funding under the program?

The purpose of the Summer Data Challenge is to support rigorous research using data, in order to generate insights and implications for how federal DOL policies, protections, and programs serve traditionally underserved communities. DOL is especially interested in understanding how data can speak to barriers that underserved communities and individuals may face to enrollment or access to benefits, services, protections, as well as in accessing agency procurement and contracting opportunities. DOL anticipates that funded projects will focus on a wide variety of issues that relate to DOL policies and programs. This includes DOL programs such as unemployment insurance; workforce training programs; and enforcement protections of the Wage and Hour Division, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and the Employee Benefits Security Administration, among others. Populations of interest include but are not limited to those from communities traditionally underserved due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, income, geography, immigrant status, veteran and disability status. Analyses must test new methods to collect or analyze existing data, test hypotheses, or analyze data to demonstrate meaningful gaps in our knowledge and, ideally, propose practical solutions to fill those gaps.

### Does DOL have any priority research topics?

In 2022, DOL is particularly interested in proposals that address a variety of research topics including the following:

- Public policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying economic downturn, including the effects of those policy responses on vulnerable or marginalized workers, such as women of color.
- Understanding how policies and programs may shape opportunities for worker organizing and collective bargaining, especially for workers who have lacked access to labor representation in the past.
- Understanding labor market competition and power, their intersection with working conditions, and how policies and programs can shape those relationships.
- The impact of workplace technologies on workers and working conditions—including how automated technologies may be used for screening and hiring job candidates, assessing workers' productivity, and managing workers—and their intersection with labor protections and policies.

DOL will select proposals based on the strength of the applications received.

### How does the program work?

Manhattan Strategy Group (MSG) is administering the program on behalf of the DOL Chief Evaluation Office (CEO). Applicants will submit proposals to MSG by the deadline of 12:00 p.m. Eastern on April 11, 2022, and MSG will make awards to winning applicants. The program runs from June 1, 2022 through September 5, 2022. Scholars

## Frequently Asked Questions About the Summer 2022 Data Challenge

Responses due by 12:00 p.m. (EDT), 04/11/2022

are also required to participate in a kick off event (July), a presentation feedback session (September) and a final briefing (October). All of the events will be virtual.

### Can my research be on topics in the context of other countries?

The Summer Data Challenge was created to explore how the Department's programs and policies serve traditionally underserved communities in the U.S., including those of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, income, geography, immigrant status, and veteran and disability status, among others. Generally, research must be focused on the U.S. context. However, we may consider research on immigration or other topics that are related to DOL-implemented policies or programs and to equity and underserved communities in the United States.

### What are the required deliverables?

Scholars will be responsible for periodically submitting updates via e-mail and providing a final working paper, presentation slides, and if applicable, public-use data file for posting on the DOL CEO website. Drafts may be shared internally among the MSG and DOL staff, and independent experts will review the draft working paper and data files. Specifically:

- By **September 5th, 2022**, awardees will produce 1) a brief, high-quality working paper, 2) a dataset and replication files, as possible (see more below), and 3) a final PowerPoint presentation on their study.
- Additionally, awardees will participate in two DOL briefings (one feedback session and the final event) to present their findings.

*If public data is used*, researchers must submit a replication file with scripts (code) and data in R and/or Stata. Data sets must be submitted in a zip file.

*If new, non-confidential data are created*, researchers must submit a public-use dataset, and replication file with scripts (code) and data in R and/or Stata. DOL is willing to negotiate the timing of when these data are published on the DOL website to accommodate academic publications.

Final products will be subject to an external technical review before publication by DOL.

### Can I include some qualitative research to supplement my quantitative research?

Yes, complementing quantitative research with additional qualitative research is allowable under the program, but the primary focus of the research should be statistical analyses of data. In your application, please describe the qualitative research plan and how you will systematically capture qualitative data. Please also include how that data could be included in a public-use data file (e.g., the transcripts could be stripped of PII-DI (Personally Identifiable Information and Direct Identifiers) and posted).

### **Do I have to submit a public-use data file?**

If public data is used, researchers must submit a replication file with scripts (code) and data in R and/or Stata.

If new, non-confidential data are created, researchers must submit a public-use dataset, and replication file with scripts (code) and data in R and/or Stata. DOL is willing to negotiate the timing of when these data are published on the DOL website to accommodate academic publications.

### **My study is based on data that cannot be made publicly available. Will I be ineligible if I cannot submit a public-use data file?**

You are still eligible to apply. If some (or all) elements of the data cannot be made publicly available (e.g., due to state or federal regulations), please describe the restrictions in your application. Elements of the data that are not prohibited from public release will be submitted as a public-use data file.

### **Can I present my research at conferences or publish in journals?**

Throughout the period of the award, DOL maintains joint rights to the results and findings produced by the project. Prior to the end of the award, any dissemination, posting, presenting, or publication of the results and findings produced by the project requires explicit approval of DOL. At the end of the award, you hold full rights and sole ownership of the results and findings produced by the project (with the exception that DOL retains the right to post the final deliverables to its website).

### **What is the process for requesting approval for disseminating my research prior to the end of the award, and under what circumstances would the request be denied?**

To request approval, please submit whatever product is going to be disseminated (e.g., slides, article) and the venue in which it is going to be disseminated (e.g., conference name, journal name) as far in advance as possible. Approval would likely not be granted in situations in which dissemination would prevent the awardee from fulfilling the terms of the award; for example, if acceptance of a paper by a journal or conference meant that a version of the paper could then not be posted to DOL's website (which is one of the terms of the award), then approval would likely not be granted. However, any request for dissemination prior to the end of the award period will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## ABOUT ELIGIBILITY

### **Do applicants have to be U.S. citizens?**

No, you may apply if you are a U.S. citizen or legally eligible to work and/or study in the U.S.

### **Is this program only for emerging researchers?**

No. Both established and emerging researchers are encouraged to apply. We welcome proposal submissions from a diverse set of scholars, considering diversity in scholars' own backgrounds, disciplines, methods, and institutions.

### **Is there a limit on the number of applications an applicant can submit?**

No, there is not a restriction on the number of applications with which an applicant could be affiliated.

### **What documents do I need to submit?**

Submissions should include C.V.s for all researchers and a proposal of no more than 2,000 words (inclusive of references, tables, and figures) that clearly identify (1) which DOL or labor-related policies or programs will be studied, (2) which traditionally underserved communities or populations will be studied, (3) which data sources will be used and a detailed description of those sources (including DOL sources and/or other sources, if applicable), (4) which methods of analysis will be used, and (5) expected research output (e.g., description of anticipated tables, figures, or regression models). Analyses may test new methods to collect or analyze existing data, test hypotheses or analyze data to demonstrate meaningful gaps in our knowledge and, ideally, propose practical solutions to fill those gaps. Proposals must also include a plan that clearly highlights how all analyses and final products will be completed by September 5, 2022.

### **How will the proposals be assessed?**

Proposals will be judged on the following criteria: (1) the technical quality of the proposal, (2) degree to which the proposed analysis will reveal how DOL policies, protections, and programs affect traditionally underserved communities; (3) the likelihood of successful implementation of the proposed research design in light of described data and analysis; and (4) the degree to which the proposal makes creative use of publicly available DOL data, on its own or merged with other external data. DOL will competitively select winners based on the above factors while ensuring that the balance of awards reflect a diversity in perspective and topics, including the scholars' own backgrounds, disciplines, methods, and institutions.

## ABOUT THE BUDGET

### **Can I use program money to fund a research assistant or team? If yes, how should we report this in the budget estimate?**

Hiring research assistants or funding summer salaries are eligible uses of the award budget; however, all expenditures must be justified in the budget of the application and will be evaluated as part of the overall application package.

### **Can applicants include indirect costs in their budget proposals?**

Any indirect costs must be shown and justified in the budget. Any applicable indirect costs will be included in the overall funding of \$30,000. If you are using your institution's federally negotiated indirect rate, please provide a copy of the negotiated indirect rate agreement. If there is no federally negotiated rate, please provide some other form of justification for the proposed indirect rate. Applicants' use of funds will be reviewed and judged on the reasonableness of budgeted items as part of the overall application package.

### **What is not covered by the award?**

Expenditures in equipment (i.e. computers), software, and conferences are not allowable costs.

*For additional information or questions regarding the application process or the program in general, please contact Manhattan Strategy Group at [datachallenge@manhattanstrategy.com](mailto:datachallenge@manhattanstrategy.com).*