

SECC Dissertation Research Funding Awards

The submission deadline for the 2026 Student and Early Career Council (SECC) Dissertation Research Funding Awards is **May 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.**

Established in 2008 by SRCD and the [Student and Early Career Council \(SECC\)](#), these non-renewable awards in the amount of up to \$2,000 USD are given to doctoral students for dissertation research proposals that merit special recognition and display strong potential to contribute to the field of child development. Submissions should be for dissertation research in the proposal stage (i.e., not completed), and money is to be used for research costs or professional development related to the proposed dissertation project.

SRCD SECC is committed to anti-racism and anti-bias efforts as informed by scientific evidence and diverse epistemologies. Projects that reflect this charge are encouraged.

SECC members and the Governing Council Representative to SECC evaluate all submissions. Evaluation criteria include the following:

- Quality and feasibility of research proposal (based on significance of the research question, theoretical rationale, methodological appropriateness, and innovation);
- Qualifications of the applicant (based on CV and letter of recommendation);
- Extent to which the award will contribute significantly to the applicant's professional development and productivity; and
- Extent to which the proposed work contributes to the field of child development.

2026 Call for Proposals

The deadline for the 2026 submissions is May 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

The Student and Early Career Council (SECC) of the Society for Research in Child Development is pleased to announce the 17th annual competition for graduate student dissertation research funding.

Eligibility:

1. Applicants must be SRCD student members at the time of application and membership must be maintained throughout the award period.
 - International members and members from underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.
 - Consistent with the SRCD initiative to improve multidisciplinary collaboration in the child development field, applications that reflect multidisciplinary research aims and/or are from non-traditional disciplines are encouraged to apply.
2. Applicants must be doctoral students in a field related to child development, in good standing with their university, and have their dissertation proposals approved by their advisor.
 - Students may apply for the award prior to dissertation committee approval, but funding will not be issued until the research project has been approved by the dissertation committee and the university's institutional Review Board.
3. Preference will be given to applicants whose project start date falls within the next year.
4. Proposed research must focus on child development, with study populations under age 18 (e.g., children, their parents, or K–12 teachers). Applications centered on young adult or college student populations will only be considered if they clearly justify their relevance to child development, such as through retrospective inquiry.

Submission Criteria:

- Submissions should be in the proposal stage (i.e., not completed).
- Award funds are to be used for research costs (e.g., participant incentives, standardized measures, research equipment) and/or methodological training (e.g., fees to attend a statistical workshop) needed to complete the dissertation.

- All expenses must be justified as needed for the completion of the dissertation.

Deadlines:

The deadline for the 2026 submissions is May 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Process:

1. SECC members and the SRCD Governing Council Representative to SECC will evaluate all submissions.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Quality and feasibility of research proposal (based on significance of the research question[s], theoretical rationale, methodological appropriateness, and innovation);
 - Qualifications of the applicant (based on CV and letter of recommendation);
 - The extent to which the award will contribute significantly to the applicant's professional development and productivity; and
 - The extent to which the proposed work contributes to the field of child development.
2. Application materials. Please use APA formatting guidelines (7th edition; 2020) and be prepared to include each of the following components as PDF files in the application site.
 - **Cover letter** (1 page maximum, double-spaced): Letter describing your research experience and interests, as well as your career goals.
 - **Project Abstract** (1 page maximum, double-spaced)
 - **Project Summary** (6 pages maximum, double-spaced): Summary of the research project, including background and rationale, an explanation of research design (methods, analyses, etc.), how the project fits your career goals and interests, and other important aspects of the study. Please note that references do not count towards the page limit, but tables and figures DO count towards the limit.
 - **Budget and Budget Justification** (1 page maximum, single-spaced): *Must be signed by your dissertation advisor.* Please provide (1) a list of each budget item with (2) an accompanying explanation about how the budget expense (item per item) will be used to help with the completion of the dissertation. Be sure to justify all expenses (no minimum, maximum \$2,000). Also, please provide (3) a list of all other sources of funding for this project.

Note regarding budget: The award must be used to support expenses that are directly needed for the completion of the dissertation (e.g., animal care, equipment, and participant incentives) or

indirectly (e.g., training workshop, consultant fees). A portion of the budget may go towards mentoring and training, if necessary, to carry out the research proposal (e.g., consultant fees, travel to trainings/seminars to acquire specialized research skills, and workshop registrations for these trainings/seminars). It may not be used for personal expenses (i.e., personal travel) or for travel to conferences to disseminate research findings (i.e., cannot be used to cover costs associated with travel to SRCD Biennial Meeting or other conferences). All expenses must be justified as needed for the completion of the dissertation. Failure to comply with this requirement may disqualify your application from further consideration.

****Please be aware that SRCD does not pay for indirect costs associated with institutions.****

- **Timeline** (1 page maximum, single-spaced): Timeline for completion of the project.
 - **Curriculum Vitae**: Should include research experience, presentations, and scientific publications.
3. A letter of recommendation from your research advisor is also required. This letter should include a statement of support and approval, address the feasibility of the research study, the student's primary and major contributions to the research, and an explanation of why the research is worthy of the award. The advisor must comment on the student's academic standing as well as the student's current progress on the dissertation. Letters are requested through the application portal by the applicant and should be submitted by **May 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET**. Applicants may send the request for a letter of recommendation prior to submitting their application to give their recommender sufficient time to upload.
 4. Award recipients will be contacted by September 2026. All applicants will be notified of funding decisions.
 5. Award recipients must acknowledge the SECC Dissertation Research Funding Award from SRCD in any resulting publications from the dissertation project.
 6. All application materials must be submitted online through the submission site. Incomplete applications and applications exceeding set page limits will not be reviewed. The deadline for submitting complete applications is May 18, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. ET.

Please send all inquiries regarding eligibility requirements, submission content, and technical assistance with the submission site to scholar@srcd.org.

[Apply here](#)

Past SRCD SECC Dissertation Funding Award Winners:

- [2025 Awardees](#)
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