

CalSPEc Equity Framework Advancement Award

The California State Policy Evidence Consortium ([CalSPEc](#)), a program embedded at [UC Center Sacramento](#), has set aside \$15,000 for an **Equity Framework Advancement Award**. The funds will be awarded through a competitive process to a University of California graduate or professional student working in concert with a faculty mentor who accepts responsibility for the veracity and quality of the finished product.

The purpose of the Award is to support research and writing of a White Paper and Policy Brief accomplishing the following aims:

- Review alternative definitions of equity, and provide a defensibly broad definition of equity for the purpose of legislative analysis in California that is consistent with [HR39](#). Outcomes of interest include health and economic outcomes but may extend to broader measures of well-being.
- Perform a thorough review of realized and proposed approaches to incorporating equity into bill analysis at the local, state, and federal levels;
 - Realized approaches: Identify governmental entities that have developed equity scorecards for bills or ordinances, and summarize key features of those programs (examples include Iowa and the District of Columbia)
 - Proposed approaches: Review and summarize findings and recommendations for legislative equity analysis issued by academic organizations and think tanks (e.g. the Urban Institute’s report entitled “Legislation for Equity: Definition, Framework, and Potential Application”)
- Based on this review, propose an evidence-based framework for assessing equity-related impacts of legislative bills in California. In addition to a verbal description, provide a Figure illustrating your framework. Be sure to account for the manner and timing of bill analysis as conducted in the California State Assembly;
- Drawing on specific examples of current or past bills (proposed, enacted, or both), describe how your framework could be successfully applied in the following areas:
 - Health
 - Education
 - Climate and the environment
 - Water and power (including utilities regulation)
 - Transportation
 - Technology (including information technology)

The successful applicant team (graduate student and faculty member) will work with CalSPEc staff to refine the research proposal (prior to preparation of the report) and to edit and design the report itself.

Key deadlines are given in the table below.

Deliverable	Date
Initial application due to CalSPEC@ucdavis.edu	December 1, 2023
Winning team selected	December 20, 2023
Winning team submits detailed proposal for feedback by CalSPEC and Assembly staff	January 19, 2023
Complete report draft due at CalSPEC office	March 1, 2024
Draft returned to authors with feedback and edits	March 8, 2024
Final report due	March 29, 2024

By accepting this award, the student and mentor also agree to participate in a briefing for Assembly members and staff in Spring 2024. Applicants also acknowledge that the legislature operates on a very tight timeline and that failure to meet deadlines for the stated deliverables will be considered a breach of the conditions of this award.

Eligibility for this award is as follows:

- Currently enrolled, degree-seeking graduate or professional student at a University of California campus;
- Commitment from a faculty mentor at the student’s institution to:
 - Review and approve plans for developing the white paper;
 - Critically revise and edit the submitted white paper;
 - Accept joint responsibility for the final product.

To apply for this award, please submit the following materials to CalSPEC@ucdavis.edu.

1. Cover letter stating the name, degrees, title, department or unit, mailing address, email address, and phone number of both the primary applicant (graduate student) and the faculty mentor, along with a brief description of your joint qualifications for undertaking this task.
2. CV or biosketch for the two participants (graduate student and faculty member).
3. A paragraph-length response to each of the following questions:
 - a. Why is establishing a framework for equity in legislation important? Why have such frameworks rarely been developed and even more rarely been implemented?
 - b. In developing your equity framework, how will you weigh tradeoffs between benefits for the average constituent against risks or harms for vulnerable subgroups.
 - c. Understanding that HR 39 emphasizes race/ethnicity, what group characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, age, gender, income/wealth, educational attainment, etc.) should be emphasized in a reasoned and broadly applicable framework for analyzing equity in legislation? Explain your reasons.

- d. Understanding that HR 39 emphasizes health and economic outcomes, what outcomes (including health and economic outcomes but potentially extending to others) should dominate the analysis? Why?
 - e. What do you see as the relative advantages and disadvantages of two alternative approaches to legislative equity analysis: 1) requiring completion of an equity analysis “form” by Legislative Committee Staff as part of their analysis of each submitted Bill vs. 2) providing general guidance to Committee Staff with the expectation that equity will be considered throughout the text of Bill analyses.
4. Letter from faculty mentor expressing commitment to supervise project and accept joint responsibility for quality of the submitted final product.

Winners will be selected by CalSPEC staff with input from legislative staff colleagues. Criteria for selection will include:

- Qualifications and experience of the graduate student and faculty mentor in areas related to equity, evidence-based public policy, and writing for a policy audience;
- Quality of answers to application questions along dimensions of originality, alignment with legislative priorities as detailed in HR 39, feasibility, and solid grounding in principles of policy analysis.
- Quality of written expression, maintaining academic rigor as well as accessibility to a policy audience.