



## 2023 Pilot Grant Program Request for Proposals

### **Introduction:**

The Center on Aging (CoA) sponsors an annual pilot grant program to promote the development of aging research at the University of Utah. The goal of this program is to encourage new investigator career development, attract established investigators to aging research, and stimulate interdisciplinary research collaborations – ultimately leading to new externally funded research. Additional information describing the program, including its previous recipients, is available at <http://aging.utah.edu/grants/pilot/index.php>

For this year's program, funding priority will be given to applications that pertain to the aim of the P30 Submission to establish the Utah Older Americans Independence Center that is currently under review, *"to expand the portfolio of multidisciplinary translational research projects to discover the mechanisms and predictors of multimorbidity resistance and resilience in older adults."* The operational definition for resilience is: "a system's capacity to resist, recover, recover better (grow), or adapt in response to a challenge or stressor." The scope of resilience may include a wide range of mechanisms and predictors - genetic, medical – including peripheral and cerebral vascular – and social determining factors including caregiving.

Applications focused on other topics may be submitted. Additional review criteria are listed below.

### **Applicants:**

Submissions from a wide range of disciplines from basic biology, clinical sciences, and social and behavioral aspects of aging are encouraged. There is priority given to applications from individuals who are *new to aging research* and from two or more investigators who are establishing a *new interdisciplinary research collaboration* in an aging-related interest area.

Principal investigators must have a Career or Tenure line University of Utah faculty appointment. While Center on Aging membership is not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to apply for membership concurrently with their application. Membership information is available at <http://aging.utah.edu/membership/join.php>

### **Budget:**

The following items may **not** be supported with pilot project funds:

- Faculty salary, with the exception of partial summer salary for faculty with a 9-month appointment if there is explicit justification. Faculty effort devoted to the pilot grant needs to be provided in the form of protected or release time from clinical or teaching responsibilities. A letter from the principal investigator's department head or dean must be submitted with the application documenting the time or percent effort that the faculty member will have available to dedicate to the pilot grant project.
- Major equipment (cost greater than \$5,000)
- Travel not directly needed for the research project (e.g. to attend conferences)

### **Review Process:**

Proposals will be reviewed by members from the Center on Aging Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will make final funding decisions. All applications will be evaluated based on the review criteria below.

### **Review Criteria:**

- Aging focus and significance
- New interdisciplinary collaboration, new investigators (junior faculty), or those new to aging research
- Scientific merit and innovative nature of the research
- Likelihood the proposed study will lead to peer-reviewed extramural funding

### **Application Process:**

Proposals should be electronically submitted as single PDF file with **all** components listed below in the following order. [Note: incomplete submissions may disqualify an application]

#### **1. Cover letter that addresses the following aspects of the proposal:**

- How this research specifically relates to aging and what is its potential significance or relevance to the field. In addition, if the PI is new to aging research, indicate intentions for future aging-related studies.
- Provide a list of three objective reviewers – *at least two external to the University of Utah*. Please include reviewer affiliations and contact information (including telephone, fax, and email address).
- Relationship that PI or co-investigators have, if any, with the Center on Aging.
- If this is a resubmission, comment on the major changes made in the revised application.

2. A letter of support from the principal investigator's department head/dean confirming they will receive protected time required to devote to the proposed project.
3. A brief proposal (2-page limit, plus references on additional pages as needed) that addresses: Significance, Innovation (include proposed role/contributions for each team member and investigator synergy), and Approach.
4. Proposed project budget (not to exceed \$25,000), following the guidelines above.
5. A plan for extramural funding (1-page limit) that addresses specific plans including a targeted funding mechanism and/or RFP.
6. NIH Biographical sketch for each co-investigator including current and pending support (5 pages max per investigator).

### **Expectations of Award Recipients:**

Recipients of this award are expected to formally apply for membership in the Center on Aging, actively participate in its programs, and provide the Center on Aging with:

- A final progress report at the conclusion of the funding period. Final payment of the award will be made upon receipt of this report.
- A financial accounting of how project funds were spent. Financial support from the Center on Aging must be acknowledged in all publications.
- Maximum funding per project is \$25,000, with a project term of one year. Budgets may be reduced as the CoA leadership determines. Unused funds must be returned to the CoA after the project term. However, recipients can submit, no later than two months before the deadline, an explanation of why the funds have not been spent and a plan to spend out the remaining funds. A no-cost extension is subject to CoA leadership approval. Grant administration is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator(s).
- Information pertaining to any publications and grant support resulting from the pilot grant project.
- A research presentation and/or poster at the 2024 Center on Aging Research Retreat.

### **Timeline:**

**The submission deadline for completed proposals is on or before:**

The proposal should be submitted electronically to Heather Podolan, Center on Aging Academic Program Manager at [heather.podolan@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:heather.podolan@hsc.utah.edu) (office phone: 801-213-4156) by the deadline **Friday, April 21, 2023** 11:59 PM Mountain Standard Time

- We anticipate making funding decisions by mid-June 2023.
- Projects may begin as early as July 1, 2023; the starting date may be negotiated.

### **Submission and Questions:**

Questions may be directed to:

- Heather Podolan, Academic Program Manager, [heather.podolan@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:heather.podolan@hsc.utah.edu)
- Dr. Mark Supiano, Executive Director, [mark.supiano@utah.edu](mailto:mark.supiano@utah.edu)
- Any Center on Aging Steering Committee member