Request for Pilot Proposals
Center for Demography of Health and Aging

January 22, 2021

Request for Proposals: Deadline March 5, 2021

The Center for Demography of Health and Aging invites interested investigators to submit proposals for pilot funding for 2021-2022.

Research Focus

Pilot proposals may be submitted on a variety of research topics. Although we welcome proposals in all areas of aging, CDHA seeks to prioritize pilots that fit or expand its thematic areas. In addition, key attributes of successful pilot applications are those with a high likelihood of leading to future external funding and pilots that support junior faculty and faculty from historically under-represented groups.

We welcome proposals that focus on:

a) Aging and the life course: Attention to linkages between the events of in utero, early and middle age, and late life health, social and economic outcomes
b) Biodemography: Health status, mortality, cognitive deterioration, senescence and the role played by gene-environment interactions, epigenetics processes, hormonal dysregulation, and microbiotic changes.
c) Determinants of disparities (race/ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic) of aging trajectories: including health and mortality, family organization and support.
d) Health economics/policy approaches to aging questions. Retirement, health care, etc.
e) Impacts of place on aging processes.

Pilot research projects are expected to lead to the formulation of a larger research proposal to be submitted for funding as an R03, R01, or other NIA funding mechanism. Pilots are not designed to support work that is close to completion or to continue research on already funded projects (unless these, themselves, can lead to additional funding). NIA considers the ‘return’ rates per pilot awarded when making future Center funding decisions, so we must focus on funding pilots that have a high likelihood of resulting in future proposals to NIH.
Budget

One year budgets are nearly always below $50,000. A typical project funds a 50% time, 12 month Research Assistant or Project Assistant or provides limited summer support for faculty. Multi-year projects are possible if properly justified. Smaller projects, including producing datasets for wider use or other activities, are also eligible. Please indicate your budgetary needs as part of the initial pilot proposal.

Number of awards

The number of awards we are able to make varies from year to year depending on allocations to CDHA provided by NIA, but we typically fund 3-4 projects

Application Process

Prepare a 1-2 page proposal with a description of your research idea and your budgetary needs. Submit proposals to Janet Clear, jclear@ssc.wisc.edu by March 5, 2021. CDHA Steering Committee members will evaluate and rank the proposals and a final decision will be made by the CDHA Director in consultation with this committee. In cases of ties or when a pilot proposal is outside the field of expertise of Steering Committee members, we will seek one or two outside evaluators in consultation with the primary investigator(s). External reviewers will be chosen among researchers in the UW-Madison or those at other universities.

Pilots approved by the committee are then forwarded to NIA program staff for final approval. Approved pilot projects must provide IRB approval for the project, a budget and justification, and a biographical sketch for the PI before funding will be released.

Expected outcomes

Funded pilot projects will be expected to provide (1) a mid-period award progress report, due the last week of February, and (2) a final report, due the first week of October in the year after the pilot is awarded. We also expect PIs to let us know when an NIH application based on the pilot work is submitted, regardless of whether it is during the year of funding or in the future. All publications resulting from pilot-funded research must be submitted to PubMed Central and associated with the Center for Demography of Health and Aging, P30AG017266.

Selection criteria

Proposals will be evaluated for (a) connection to the research focus identified above; (b) likelihood that proposed work will result in NIH or other funding within 2-3 years; (c) likelihood the research will result in important publications with insights into the demography of aging; and (d) credentials of investigators – young investigators are encouraged to apply.

For more information, contact:

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