Request for Pilot Research Proposals

**Applications are being accepted for 1-year Pilot-Project Awards of up to $30,000
for the project period 07/01/2021 - 06/30/2022**

CICADA, the ***Center for Improving Care Delivery for the Aging***, is Penn's NIA-funded Resource Center for Minority Aging Research (RCMAR). CICADA seeks to enhance the diversity of the aging research workforce by mentoring promising scientists from under-represented groups for sustained careers in aging research addressing social, behavioral, and economic questions, particularly issues that pertain to minority older adults. Those awarded 1-year pilots through this mechanism will become CICADA RCMAR Scientists and will receive additional career development support following the 1-year pilot period through CICADA. See FAQ to learn about the full set of resources available to CICADA RCMAR Scientists.

Penn's CICADA emphasizes inter- and trans-disciplinary science that provides an evidence base addressing issues of care quality, access, affordability, and/or equity. Broadly, the collection of the sciences is referred to as Health Services Research (HSR), but it includes disciplines such as economics, sociology, anthropology, statistics, communications, business, law, and others.

If you have any questions about the center or this RFA, please contact us at CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

- Applications are being accepted from post-doctoral researchers and junior faculty who are underrepresented in research. This includes (1) MD and MD/PhD clinical fellows who have completed their residency, (2) PhD postdoctoral trainees, and (3) MD/PhD, MD, and PhD junior faculty [instructors or assistant professor for <3 years at time of application] who are underrepresented[1] (see below):
    - a. Individuals from racial and ethnic groups that have been shown by the National Science Foundation to be underrepresented in health-related sciences on a national basis (see data at http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/showpub.cfm?TopID=2&SubID=27) and the report Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering). The following racial and ethnic groups have been shown to be underrepresented in biomedical research: Blacks or African Americans, Hispanics or Latinos, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific

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[1] National Institutes of Health. Updated Notice of NIH's Interest in Diversity (NOT-OD-20-031). November 22, 2019. Available at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-031.html

Islanders. In addition, it is recognized that underrepresentation can vary from setting to setting; individuals from racial or ethnic groups that can be demonstrated convincingly to be underrepresented by the grantee institution should be encouraged to participate in NIH programs to enhance diversity. For more information on racial and ethnic categories and definitions, see the OMB Revisions to the Standards for Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity (https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/html/97-28653.htm).

b. Individuals with disabilities, who are defined as those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, as described in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended. See NSF data at, https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/2017/nsf17310/static/data/tab7-5.pdf.

c. Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, defined as those who meet *two or more* of the following criteria:

  i. Were or currently are homeless, as defined by the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Definition: https://nche.ed.gov/mckinney-vento/);

  ii. Were or currently are in the foster care system, as defined by the Administration for Children and Families (Definition: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/focus-areas/foster-care);

  iii. Were eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for two or more years (Definition: https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/income-eligibility-guidelines);

  iv. Have/had no parents or legal guardians who completed a bachelor's degree (see https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2018/2018009.pdf);

  v. Were or currently are eligible for Federal Pell grants (Definition: https://www2.ed.gov/programs/fpg/eligibility.html);

  vi. Received support from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) as a parent or child (Definition: https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-eligibility-requirements).

  vii. Grew up in one of the following areas: a) a U.S. rural area, as designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Rural Health Grants Eligibility Analyzer (https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/rural-health), *or* b) a Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services-designated Low-Income and Health Professional Shortage Areas (qualifying zipcodes are included in the file). Only one of the two possibilities in #7 can be used as a criterion for the disadvantaged background definition

d. Literature shows that women from the above backgrounds (categories A, B, and C) face particular challenges at the graduate level and beyond in scientific fields. (See, e.g., From the NIH: A Systems Approach to Increasing the Diversity of Biomedical Research Workforce https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5008902/)

- Trainees must be committed to developing new research skills in health research focused on aging.

- The affiliation of applicant can be from any University. This program is not limited to those with Penn affiliations.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO AWARDED PILOT PROJECTS

- Three (3) one-year pilot project awards are available.
- The maximum funding available per pilot project is $30,000 (including F&A rate of 8%).
- Pilot funds can support salary, research expenses, travel, equipment, and/or supplies as appropriate to the project.
- Any sub-contracts (including F&A) must be included in the budgeted amount.

FOCUS OF PILOT PROJECTS

- Support will be given to pilot research projects that are consistent with the goal of CICADA, which is to train emerging scientists from underrepresented backgrounds in health services research as it applies to the most pressing issues for aging Americans, particularly minority elders.
- Projects that leverage the data in the CICADA Analysis Core will be given priority. More details on the CICADA Analysis Core are available online.
- The proposed pilot project should lead to publication of at least one first-authored, peer-reviewed manuscript plus subsequent funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), particularly the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR PILOT PROJECTS

- Quality and rigor of proposed research
- Relatedness of proposed research to CICADA's focus
- Likelihood that proposed research would lead to subsequent NIH-funded projects, particularly NIA-funded projects
- Credentials and promise of investigator in aging-related research

APPLICATION TIMELINE

1. **By December 4, 2020**, applicants must submit application HERE.
2. **By February 1, 2021**, candidates will be notified if they have been selected and will be asked to supply supporting documents (including, but not limited to, IRB approval, human subjects training, enrollment reporting, and other requested materials).
3. For accepted pilots**,** the full proposals and supporting documents will be forwarded to the NIH/NIA for final approval by **April 1, 2021**.
4. The award will then be disbursed after **July 1, 2021.**

Last updated: 9/28/2020

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Applicants must complete and submit the following required documents by **December 4, 2020**:

1. Complete the required online application form using the require form here.
2. Upload the following required documents with the online application form:
   A. **A synopsis describing the proposed pilot project.** The synopsis must be single-spaced in Arial font with 11-point typeface, one-inch margins, on 8.5"x11"-size page, limited to a maximum of two pages and must include:
      I. Title of project
      II. Description of proposed pilot project including study aim(s) and a brief description of the design and data to be used in the pilot project
      III. A statement about how the proposed pilot project is related to the CICADA focus of health services research as it applies to the most pressing issues for aging Americans, particularly minority elders
      IV. A brief timeline that documents the feasibility of completing the pilot project in one year
      V. A specific statement about how this pilot project will inform the applicant's future research and how it will lead to larger funding by the NIH/NIA or another agency
      VI. A description of the applicant including their role on the project, career objectives, and how CICADA support would help achieve those objectives
      VII. Proposed mentor(s) and a statement about their involvement and the role they will play in conducting the pilot project. Applicants without mentors who have a potential project should contact CICADA CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu for assistance in identifying a mentor in advance of the application deadline.
   B. **Budget and budget justification** (A budget template can be accessed here)
   C. **Applicant's current Curriculum Vitae (CV), dated**
   D. **Biosketches for all Mentors, and/or senior key personnel.** The current approved NIH Biosketch is required. Additional information is available at: https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm

Please contact *CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu* with any questions.