

September 3, 2024

Dear Colleagues:

The University of Maryland Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center (UM-OAIC) Pilot and Exploratory Studies Core (PESC) at the School of Medicine is providing funding for two-year pilot projects. This funding will provide start-up support for quality research proposals of high relevance to the Center's mission, which addresses the processes by which function is lost, and the multiple factors that affect the onset and progression of disability in older adults. Studies may examine the mechanisms underlying functional impairments associated with stroke, hip fracture, osteoarthritis, and other common chronic diseases or injuries in older adults. Studies proposed in human subjects, studies that utilize pre-clinical methods, and studies utilizing existing databases will all be considered for funding.

Please circulate this announcement to other faculty in your division, department, or school.

Funding: The Center will consider funding 3 pilot projects, each with a budget up to \$30,000 in direct costs for the 1st year of work only. These projects are renewable for a second year pending approval of a progress report by the Pepper Center leaders. No additional funds will be provided during the second year. It is expected that a peer-reviewed manuscript will be written and a proposal for external funding will be submitted within 12 months following successful completion of the pilot study. The UM-OAIC is looking to support new investigators and increase collaborations on campus. As a result, projects that involve 2 or more investigators who have not worked together previously in an aging research area will be given priority when reviewed.

A pilot project investigator (PI) should be a full-time junior faculty member with limited external funding, a post-doctoral fellow with a written departmental commitment to faculty appointment within the coming academic year, or a more senior funded investigator transitioning to research in aging. PIs may use the funds for technical support, but not for their own salaries. There must be a letter of commitment from the department to support a minimum of 10% of the PI's salary and effort for up to 2 years on the grant project. Additionally, human subjects (IRB) or IACUC approval is required before funding will be released.

Application Process: Interested investigators need to submit their NIH Biosketch and one for any co-investigators and complete the attached form that contains the following:

- 1) A specific description of how the project relates to the theme of the Pepper Center;
- 2) A statement on how this pilot funding will lead to the next grant submission as well as advance the investigator's future research in aging;
- 3) A brief narrative of the proposed research justifying the hypothesis and aims, primary outcomes, analyses, and the timeline for the completion of the research;
- 4) A list of the potential collaborating mentors and associated center core leaders; and
- 5) A description of the Pepper Center core services that will be required to conduct the research.

Letters of intent are due by 5pm on **October 31, 2024** in WORD format.



It is expected that your project will utilize at least one research core of the UM-OAIC. Interested applicants must discuss their project with a core leader (below) to assure compatibility with the center. For more information about the UM-OAIC's mission and core services, please visit <http://www.medschool.umaryland.edu/peppercenter/>. To submit a letter of intent, please send it electronically in WORD format to Anne Sullens at asullens@som.umaryland.edu. The pilot projects that show promise will be invited to submit a five-page application.

For anyone that is interested in attending, there will be a presentation by PESC leaders who will discuss the LOI and full application process for pilot funding that will take place on Thursday, October 10, 2024 at 4pm. See zoom link below to attend:
<https://umaryland.zoom.us/j/96462788639?pwd=Y2PFufWOTZKRp1Mqc8ZZ0wLaoBYE3v.1>
Meeting ID: 964 6278 8639 **Passcode: 106596**

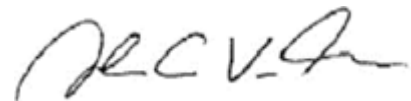
Investigators who are invited to submit a five-page pilot project application will be required to participate in a Research Design Studio, a service under the direction of Dr. Michael Terrin. The goal of the Research Design Studio is to support the development of rigorously designed pilot study proposals in consultation with investigators with expertise specific to each proposal.

Letter of intent due by October 31, 2024
 Notification of LOI acceptance by November 22, 2024
 Pilot project applications due by January 31, 2025
 Decision notification by April 30, 2025
 Funded pilot projects begin on July 1, 2025 or upon NIA release of funds

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Anne Sullens at 410-706-1695 or by e-mail at asullens@som.umaryland.edu.

Sincerely,





Stephen Seliger, MD, MS
 PESC Leader
 UM-OAIC

Jennifer Albrecht, PhD
 PESC Co-Leader
 UM-OAIC

Avelino Verceles, MD, MS
 PESC Co-Leader
 UM-OAIC

UM-OAIC Core Leaders	Area of Research
Jennifer Albrecht, PhD	TBI, sleep disorders, cognition, Epidemiological methods
Odessa Addison, DPT, PhD	Mobility, Function, Intramuscular Fat
Leslie Katzel, MD, PhD	Applied Physiology
Jay Magaziner, PhD, MSHyg	Translational Research and Epidemiological Methods, Hip Fracture
Larry Magder, PhD	Biostatistics, Epidemiologic Methods, Study Design
Mary-Claire Roghmann, MD, MS	Adult Infectious Disease
Alice Ryan, PhD	Muscle Biology and Applied Physiology
Stephen Seliger, MD, MS	Chronic Kidney Disease, Aging Cognition, Physical Function
Michelle Shardell, PhD	Biostatistics, Epidemiology, Gerontology, Microbiome
John Sorkin, MD, PhD	Biostatistics and Epidemiology
Michael Terrin, MDCM, MPH	Clinical Trials, Pulmonary Disease, Cardiovascular Epidemiology
Avelino Verceles, MD, MS	Physical Rehab and Nutrition in Survivors of Critical Illness
Chris Ward, PhD	Muscle and Skeletal Biology
Kelly Westlake, PhD, MSc, PT	Rehabilitation, Stroke, Balance, Falls, Motor Learning, Cognition, Neuroimaging
Larry Zhang, PhD	Musculoskeletal rehabilitation, robotics, osteoarthritis

2024 Pilot Letter of Intent Application
University of Maryland Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center (UM-OAIC) at
the School of Medicine

Application Process: Interested pilot project investigators need to submit a NIH Biosketch of the principal and co-investigator and the following (please add additional space if needed; no more than 3 pages total):

- Name:
- Faculty Position:
- School/Department/Division:
- Title of Pilot Project:
- Name(s) of Mentors:
- Name(s) of Co-Investigators:

- 1.) A specific description of how the project relates to the theme of the center.

- 2) A statement on how this pilot funding will lead to the next grant submission as well as advance your future research in aging.

- 3) A brief narrative of the proposed research justifying the hypothesis and aims, primary outcomes, analyses, and the timeline for the completion of the research.

- 4) A list of the potential collaborating mentors and Pepper center core leader(s) you met with.

- 5) A description of the core services that will be required to conduct the research.

Letters of intent are due by 5pm on **October 31, 2024** in WORD format to asullens@som.umaryland.edu