

## University of Minnesota Life Course Center on the Demography and Economics of Aging Call for Pilot Project Proposals 2021/2022

The Life Course Center, an NIA-funded Center on the Demography and Economics of Aging, invites investigators to submit proposals for pilot funding to support research projects for the period from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. We are seeking innovative pilot proposals addressing aging contexts, trends, dynamics, and disparities. We strongly encourage proposals from new and early stage investigators, scholars from underrepresented backgrounds, and from new interdisciplinary teams, and priority will be given to applicants from these groups. Pilot funds are intended to support research that will lead to proposals for external funding.

### Key Dates

- Informational presentation and Q&A session: Thursday, **November 19, 2020 at 1:30 CST**.
- Submission of a required letter of intent (LOI). Deadline: **December 15, 2020**
- Proposal due date: **February 15, 2021**
- Funding decision by March

### Funding Priorities

The Life Course Center (LCC) at the University of Minnesota emphasizes life course processes and contexts in the demography and economics of aging shaping health and well-being in an aging society. We focus especially on the contexts of population processes, the ways life course pathways accentuate disparities in later adulthood, and the importance for health of social participation in (paid and unpaid) work and other activities. The LCC recruits and fosters connections among researchers across disciplines and develops leading-edge collaborative pilot studies.

Proposals will be given priority that address one of the LCC's research themes:

- **Later Life-Course Population Trends in Context:** Determinants within and across space, time, and social location of population trends at older ages in physical and cognitive functioning (including AD/ADRD), disability, morbidity, mortality, health and well-being.
- **Life-Course Dynamics as Disparity Mechanisms:** Life-course pathways through which social, behavioral, environmental, institutional, and structural risks lead to disparities in healthy aging, including the unequal distribution of protective factors (e.g., income adequacy, positive early determinants, and health behaviors).
- **Interrelationships of Work, Family, Community Participation, and Health:** The interconnectedness of work and other social engagement for later adult health outcomes, an under-researched area.

Proposals must fit the National Institute on Aging emphasis on life course processes to improve the health and well-being of older adults. The proposed research should focus primarily on health outcomes, health-related behaviors, and other health and demographic determinants. We will also support competitive proposals on COVID-19 impacts on these outcomes.

Pilot projects should be designed to support the development of a larger research project that will be submitted under an NIA grant mechanism (R03, R01, R21). Accordingly, pilot project proposals should justify the need for pilot funds in order to successfully facilitate transition to larger research projects. Note that pilot projects are not intended to support work to complete an existing study. Addendums to existing projects are allowable only if they represent a new line of research consistent with LCC themes and have the promise to lead to a new proposal for NIA funding. NIA considers the success rate of grants submitted from the pilot projects when making decisions about funding future LCC pilot projects.

## Eligibility

Must have or be eligible for PI status at UMN, including affiliated campuses.

## Budget

We aim to fund three to five pilot projects per year with budgets between \$15,000 to \$45,000 per project. In special circumstances, for especially ambitious or urgent research, we may consider a budget of over \$45,000. Pilot project funds must be used to cover expenses related to the proposed study (e.g., for a graduate RA, to collect preliminary data that will inform a larger future study, to purchase relevant data for preliminary analyses, etc.) within guidelines for federally allowable expenses. Pilot funds for faculty salaries are limited to \$10,000, including fringe, and are subject to the NIH salary cap. Funds may be used to pay collaborators outside the University of Minnesota as consultants on the proposed project, limited to \$10,000. Funds may not be used for conference or other dissemination-related travel. Please email [lifecourse@umn.edu](mailto:lifecourse@umn.edu) if you have any questions about developing a competitive budget.

Project time periods are for one year, and all proposed work must be accomplished during that period. Again, this is an important metric in reporting to NIA on the success of our pilot program—information that NIA will evaluate when deciding on the provision of additional pilot project funds for future LCC projects.

The number of awards we are able to make will vary from year to year depending on allocations to LCC provided by NIA, but we will typically fund 3 to 5 projects.

## Letter of Intent Requirements

- Title
- Investigators (lead and collaborating investigators)
  - Names, departments/units, email addresses
- Additional items (1 page maximum, single-spaced with half inch margins, size 11 font )
  - Short abstract, relevance of project to [LCC themes](#), and outcome (proposal) (~½ page)
  - Rough budget request (~ ½ page)

Submit a letter of intent to [lifecourse@umn.edu](mailto:lifecourse@umn.edu), Subject: Pilot Project Letter of Intent, by no later than midnight on December 15, 2020.

## Pilot Project Proposal Requirements

- Title
- Investigators (lead and collaborating investigators)
  - Names, departments/units, email addresses
- Specific Aims (1 page)
  - Single-spaced with half inch margins, size 11 font
  - The Specific Aims should describe concisely the goals of the proposed research and summarizes the expected outcome(s), including the impact that the results of the proposed research will exert on the research field(s) involved. Aims also should include the specific objectives of the research proposed (e.g., to test a stated hypothesis, create a novel design, solve a specific problem, challenge an existing paradigm or clinical practice, address a critical barrier to progress in the field, or develop new technology).
- Research Strategy (2 pages)
  - Single-spaced with half inch margins, size 11 font
  - The Research Strategy should
    - Highlight the significance of the project and clearly tie the proposed research to LCC and NIA research priorities;

- Provide a brief overview of relevant literature;
  - Indicate two to three innovative aspects of the proposed research;
  - And, provide a summary of the data and analytical approach to be used for the pilot work.
- Timeline (Up to half a page)
  - Tasks and goals for the project broken down by quarters
  - Plan for submitting a larger grant to NIA, specifying the mechanism and expected date for submission
- Budget
  - Detailed budget using [PHS 398 Form 4](#)
  - Detailed budget justification--please make it clear how the requested funds, in the budget categories in the PHS form, will support the proposed pilot work
- [NIH Biosketch](#) for each key member of the research team (biosketches for graduate students are not required but are permitted if the graduate RA is a key intellectual contributor to the proposed project)
- Human subjects
  - Please indicate if your research involves human subjects. If you already have human subjects approval, please attach the approval letter (or exemption letter if applicable).

Submit proposals to [lifecourse@umn.edu](mailto:lifecourse@umn.edu), Subject: Pilot Project Proposal, by no later than midnight on February 15, 2021

Projects selected for funding will also be required to provide an NIH section on human subjects

- NIH protection of human subjects information including enrollment table
- IRB approval will be necessary by July 1, 2021.

### **Awarded Project Requirements and Outcomes**

Funded projects will be expected to provide 1) two quarterly progress reports, 2) an end of year report in the format required by NIA in April of the project year, 3) a final report due at the end of the one-year period; 4) updates regarding grant submissions resulting from the pilot project by April 1 in the following 3 years.

All presentations and publications resulting from the pilot project must acknowledge grant P30AG066613 from the National Institute on Aging (NIA), and all publications must be submitted to PubMed Central. LCC staff are available to answer questions regarding NIH's public access policy and to administratively support the submission of research products to PubMed Central.

### **Review Criteria**

- Topic area: Alignment with LCC themes and [NIA Population and Social Processes Branch priorities](#)
- Potential impact: Extending prior science via conceptual innovation and cutting-edge methodology
- Scientific design: Including conceptual framework, methodology, and measurement
- Feasibility: Timeline and budget appropriate for project goals and design
- End product goals: Does the proposed pilot work hold promise to result in a competitive proposal for external funding (ideally through NIA)?
- Investigators:
  - Early stage investigators:
    - Track record of publication
    - Strong interest in grant proposal process and intention to submit a proposal
    - Consultants and mentors appropriate for the project
  - Mid-career and senior investigators
    - History of high impact research
    - Funding record

- Building a new team or moving in a new research direction -- special consideration will be given to scholars who have not previously done aging research but who show promise and interest in moving into aging research
- Investigative team has high potential for funding from NIA

## Timeline

Based on NIA expectations, pilot project investigators must meet several deadlines pre and post award. The deadlines for submission and review, execution of the study, and post award deliverables are provided below.

### Submission and Review Process:

November 11, 2020	Request for Proposals for 2021-2022 LCC Pilot Grants released
November 19, 2020	Proposal process presentation and Q&A
December 15, 2020	<b>Required</b> Letter of Intent (LOI) due, with brief description
December 29, 2020	LOI feedback to investigators
February 15, 2021	Proposals due
Early March, 2021	LCC Advisory Board Review
Mid-March, 2021	Funding decisions
March 30, 2021	Revisions due on proposals that will be sent to NIA for approval
March 30, 2021	IRB and enrollment tables due for selected projects
May to June 2021	NIA approval process

### Award deadlines

July 2021	Study start date; IRB approval needed, if required
September 30, 2021	1st quarterly report
January 15, 2022	2nd quarterly report
March 30, 2022	RPPR formatted report due
June 30, 2022	Final report due
Summer 2022	Support for grant proposal submission provided

### Post Award Requirements

Fall 2022	Publications and grants submitted
March 30, 2023	Updated report on pilot project outcomes
March 30, 2024	Updated report on pilot project outcomes
March 30, 2025	Updated report on pilot project outcomes

For more information, contact:

[lifecourse@umn.edu](mailto:lifecourse@umn.edu) with subject line, LCC Pilot Program