**Request for Applications:** Stein Institute for Research on Aging and the Center for Healthy Aging at UC San Diego 2024 Pilot Grant Program

April 4, 2024

The Stein Institute for Research on Aging and the Center for Healthy Aging and the Stein Institute for Research on Aging (SIRA/CHA) 2024-25 pilot grant program solicits proposals for innovative research projects. We are an integrated, multi-disciplinary, cross-campus group that aims to advance and promote health and well-being in the field of healthy aging through research, education, and community outreach. The purpose of the pilot funding is to foster **early-stage interdisciplinary research focused on the study and promotion of healthy aging**. These awards are designed to help investigators generate pilot and feasibility data to support extramural grant applications.

**Proposal Due Date:** May 3, 2024 at 5pm PST

**Theme:** The focus of these pilot projects should be related to: 1) understanding the factors (e.g. biological, behavioral) that impact healthy aging; or 2), Advancing innovative strategies for promoting healthy aging. Healthy aging is broadly defined as: maintaining or promoting physical, mental, and cognitive health to promote well-being and quality of life in older age.

**General Guidelines:**

We expect each application to name a specific NIA approved concept (<https://www.nia.nih.gov/approved-concepts>) that will be targeted in a subsequent grant application. Note that specific funding opportunities for these concepts are typically released within 3-6 months. Alternatively, an active NIA funding opportunity may also be targeted as long as it does not expire in 2025.

We encourage investigators to take advantage of existing data and informatics-based approaches and to include variables that employ principles of diversity, equity and inclusion (e.g., include populations underrepresented in research, consider community’s values, strengths and priorities, measure social determinants of health, measure diversity).

We also encourage applicants to utilize resources that SIRA/CHA has to offer, including:

* Existing data from our longitudinal life-span aging cohort, the Successful Aging Evaluation Study (SAGE). The SAGE study is a prospective cohort study of 1,800 randomly selected, demographically representative of San Diego, community-dwelling individuals ages 20 to over 100 years. The specific assessments and the years that the assessment were collected can be found [here.](https://healthyaging.ucsd.edu/research/SAGE-Survey-Contents-Scales-Domains-2010-2023-for-publication-use.pdf)
* A novel, first of its kind “living lab” in the Belmont Senior Living community on Nobel Drive, just a few miles from the La Jolla campus. This lab is embedded in the senior living community on the 6th floor in a studio apartment and provides researchers with an opportunity to collaborate with residents and conduct novel research on-site. This could include using the space to conduct research related to sensors, testing innovative technology, conducting physical assessments, utilizing it as a meeting space for participant interviews, etc. Proposals with plans to utilize the living lab space will be considered.
* The UCSD Geroscience lab provides support for aging biomarkers research, including biospecimen collection and processing. The Geroscience lab has a particular focus on mitochondrial bioenergetics but can also facilitate research investigating other biological hallmarks of aging.

**Eligibility:** All UC San Diego faculty members can apply for Pilot funds. Early career investigators, and those new to aging research, are particularly encouraged to apply. UC San Diego Postdoctoral fellows and individuals with pending faculty appointments must include a letter of support from a faculty mentor.

**Project Duration:** The funding for this program is for one year. Funding is expected to begin no later than 8/1/2024. Unless a no-cost extension has been approved, projects must be completed by 7/30/2025.

**Budget:**

Individual PIs may seek up to $20,000.

To encourage interdisciplinary research, teams including PIs from different Departments may seek up to $40,000.

**Application Requirements:**

* One page cover letter (including target NIA Approved Concept or FOA)
* Up to three-page proposal including the following sections: Specific aims, background/significance, innovation, approach, analytical plan, and anticipated timeline.
* Up to 500 words describing how this pilot award will be used to support a future grant application.
* References
* Budget and justification
* Investigator(s) NIH bio sketch or CV
* Letters of collaboration and/or support (if relevant)

**Formatting:**Use an Arial, Georgia, Helvetica, or Palatino Linotype, a font size of 11 points or larger and single-spaced with a one-half inch margin (top, bottom, left, and right) for all pages.

**Submission:** Proposals should be submitted electronically as a single PDF file to our email healthyaging@health.ucsd.edu

**Review Process**: Proposals will be reviewed by the Center for Healthy Aging steering committee members. Notification of funding will be made by May 31, 2024.

Information on resources available through SAGE, Living Lab, and Geroscience can be found at:
<https://healthyaging.ucsd.edu/research/pilot-program.html>

Investigators interested in applying may contact **Dr. Anthony Molina** (ajmolina@health.ucsd.edu), Stein Institute Scientific Director, to discuss project relevance and SIRA/CHA) research resources.

We look forward to receiving your proposals. Please contact Danielle Glorioso (dglorioso@ucsd.edu), the Executive Director of the UC San Diego Center for Healthy Aging and the Stein Institute for Research on Aging with any questions.