

To: Faculty at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, LSU Health Science Center in New Orleans, the University of Alabama, and Tuskegee University

From: Thomas W. Buford, PhD
Professor of Medicine
Gerontology, Geriatrics, and Palliative Care
Senior Scientist
UAB Integrative Center for Aging Research

Alayne Markland, DO, MSc
Professor of Medicine
Gerontology, Geriatrics, and Palliative Care
Senior Scientist and Interim Director
UAB Integrative Center for Aging Research

Subject: This RFA is seeking pilot research project proposals focused preservation of independence among vulnerable and under-resourced older adults in the Deep South

Research Focus: This pilot and feasibility (P/F) program is intended to provide support for new and innovative research projects focused on clinical research that will lead to advances in promoting the independence of older adults, with an emphasis on vulnerable and under-resourced older adults throughout the Deep South region. Investigators at UAB are preparing an application for an NIH-supported P30 center grant focused on this theme that will be submitted in Fall 2022. As part of the application, the UAB team has committed to make faculty from several of the UAB [CCTS Partner Network sites](#) – LSUHS in New Orleans, University of Alabama, and Tuskegee University – eligible for center support. This support will include consultations and support for existing federally funded studies, research training programs for early career investigators, and funds for pilot/exploratory studies. In support of the application, the UAB team is requesting submissions for the pilot/exploratory studies program to be included in the application. **If the P30 center application is funded, those selected pilot projects will also receive funding, with a projected start date of Summer 2023.**

Application Deadline: June 25, 2022, 5pm CT. (Earliest submission date will be May 2, 2022)

Available Awards: Anticipated awards will include R03-level projects (\$50K/yr for 2 years) as well as smaller exploratory awards (\$25K/yr for 2 years). All applicants will use the same application procedure, and should ask for funds appropriate to the scope of the project, up to the maximum of \$50K/year.

All awardees will be also be expected to participate in a career development training program designed to help awardees in continuing their successful research careers. Applicants (regardless of institution) are encouraged to obtain additional support from other related entities (i.e. department or center) to maximize the value of the award. All NIH standards will apply regarding allowable/unallowable costs; and indirect costs for external awards will be awarded at a maximum of the UAB indirect cost rate.

Faculty Eligibility: Full-time faculty at UAB, LSUHS, UA, or TU who are early/mid-career investigators (e.g., Instructor, Assistant or Associate Professor) without previous NIH R01 or equivalent (i.e. independent project within a program project) funding are eligible to apply.

Project Eligibility: Eligible projects will be clinical research projects related to the theme of “**Preserving independence among vulnerable and under-resourced older adults in the Deep South**”. Specifically, projects should focus on disability prevention and/or rehabilitation in one of three broad areas of disability – physical, mental, and/or social. Moreover, projects should address one of the following groups.

- hospitalized, in post-acute care, or have severe/critical illness
- have multiple chronic conditions (MCCs)
- suffer from chronic pain
- have a limb amputation or undergoing a formal physical rehabilitation program
- have sensory conditions (i.e. vision/hearing impairment)
- are from a racial/ethnic minority group
- identify as LGBTQ+
- from low SES background
- from a rural area
- are caregivers
- are socially isolated
- are U.S. Military Veterans

Projects will also be required to utilize at least one of the proposed research cores (below). Interested applicants should contact Dr. Christy Carter (cartercs@uabmc.edu) to discuss the potential project and find the appropriate contact to finalize core contributions to and budgeting for the proposed project.

Translational Science Research Core. Designed to support prospective, lab-based studies with specific expertise and research support focused on the measurement/assessment of chronic pain, cognitive status evaluations, assessment and interventions in nutrition, and/or the development or implementation of behavior-based interventions and assessments.

Dissemination and Implementation (D&I) Science Core. Designed to support aging-related research initiatives and amplify their impact through consultations (e.g., theories and frameworks, methods, study design, outcomes) and ongoing support (e.g., advise on integrating D&I into research portfolio, facilitate data collection strategies, assist with grant and dissemination activities).

Community-Engaged Research Core. Designed to support implementation of research studies in the community, providing resources and connections necessary for implementing research in the communities where it is needed most.

Clinical Informatics and Biostatistics Core. Designed to support science capitalizing on large data infrastructures, in particular UAB Hospital System data, as well as in providing basic biostatistics support for projects focused on the OAIC theme.

Criteria for Review. Emphasis will be placed on scientific merit and integration with the program theme. Applications will be reviewed by the executive committee of investigators leading the center application. Proposals will be evaluated on the basis of:

1. Significance, methodological approach, scientific merit and innovation
2. Relevance to the program theme outlined under “Project Eligibility” above
3. Potential to result in subsequent larger NIH funded projects. A clear description of how the project will lead to an R01-level award is required.
4. Use of research core(s)
5. Investigators and environment
6. Budget and timeline appropriateness + leveraging of additional funds

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION & GUIDELINES

Please follow the guidelines. Incomplete proposals or those not following the guidelines shown below will not be reviewed. Proposals not consulting with a research core for alignment will be considered non-responsive. Proposals must be submitted online using [RED-ASSIST](#), a REDCap-based project designed to facilitate proposals, and the RED-ASSIST online submission form completed by **June 25, 2022**.

Formatting requirements:

1. All text should be written in Arial 11 point font with 0.5 margins (top, bottom, left, right)
2. Figures and tables should not contain text with font sizes below 9 points
3. Final grant proposal document should be submitted as a single PDF file.
4. The itemized budget should be included as part of the PDF.

Required documents and page limits:

1. **PROPOSAL FACE PAGE** (1 page maximum)
 - 1.a. Proposal title
 - 1.b. PI/PIs -- name, degree, position, academic institution, department/unit
 - 1.c. Other Key personnel — name, degree, position, department/unit
 - 1.d. Proposal Abstract (30 lines maximum)
2. **PROPOSAL APPROACH** (5 pages maximum)
 - 2.a. Specific Aims (1 page maximum)
 - 2.b. Research Plan (4 pages maximum)
3. **REFERENCES**
4. **BUDGET & BUDGET JUSTIFICATION** (use SF424R&R Budget forms)
5. **BIOSKETCHES** (PI/PIs and Key personnel)