

Request for Research Education Scholar Applications
from the University of Florida
Claude D. Pepper Older American's Independence Center (OAIC)
Research Education Core focused on

Promoting Mobility and Independence

Release Date: October 1, 2021
Full Application due January 31, 2022

The University of Florida Claude D. Pepper Older American's Independence Center (OAIC) is seeking applications for its Pepper Scholar Program from early stage investigators conducting research related to the OAIC theme of **promoting mobility and independence**. Investigators with a research program focusing on any aspects of pain & aging, mobility, nervous system involvement in mobility, circadian rhythm & sleep, and cancer & aging are strongly encouraged to apply.

RFA information workshop

***November 1, 2021 from 3:30 - 4:30PM**

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99355776212?pwd=eHUyZmVHTlDaNGU0VzJECWhUUFldz09>

UF OAIC Cores

Scholars **MUST** utilize select OAIC Cores as a research resource described below in "Research Component". A brief description of each core follows.

The Research Education Core, led by Christiaan Leeuwenburgh (Ph.D.) and Roger Fillingim (Ph.D.) which recruits and supports talented early stage investigators and provides mentored research and personalized training, including a common core of activities that increase the aptitude for translational science.

The Clinical Research Core, led by Steven Anton, Ph.D. and Marco Pahor, M.D., provides the infrastructure and expertise for conducting clinical research across the spectrum of translational investigation.

The Metabolism and Translational Science Core, led by Christiaan Leeuwenburgh, Ph.D., in collaboration with all other Cores, utilizes biomarkers to determine specific biological mechanisms of functional decline in elderly populations and in pre-clinical animal models of aging.

The Biostatistics Core, led by Peihua Qiu, Ph.D., supports study design, sample size calculations, randomization, and state-of-the-art statistical analyses of OIAC supported studies. The core also provides data coordination, including developing data collection forms, designing web-based capture systems, and data management.

The Data Science and Applied Technology Core, led by Todd Manini, Ph.D. and Sanjay Ranka, Ph.D., provides infrastructure, trained personnel, consultative and collaborative expertise to analyze data from electronic medical records (EMR) and to extract meaningful information from complex biomechanical and physiological data to meet the goals of the UF OAIC. The core conducts exploratory analyses of existing epidemiological and clinical trial data to support grant development and publications.

For more information on the UF OAIC visit www.aging.ufl.edu

Who should apply?
What are the evaluation criteria?

Basic science and clinical researchers who are early stage faculty or post-doctoral associates are encouraged to apply. Applicants may originate from any College within the University of Florida or the VA Medical Center, and can include collaborations with other institutions, particularly those with OAIC's.

Primary Qualifications:

1. Faculty appointment at the Assistant Professor or Post-Doctoral Associate level
2. A proposed research project relevant to enhancing late-life health and independence through interdisciplinary approaches to promote mobility and independence
3. Commitment to a research career with an aging focus
4. Not having received as PI NIH R01 or similar grant awards
5. Sufficient protected time (50-75%) to accomplish the research career development plan
6. Explicit support of Department Chair / Division Chief

Selection Process:

1. Peer review committee evaluates applicants
2. Appointment by the Pepper Center Executive Committee
3. Endorsement by External Advisory Committee
4. NIA approval

Research Component

Basic science projects and secondary data analyses projects are allowed a total amount of \$25,000 and clinical research projects which involve human subjects are allowed a total amount of \$50,000 in direct costs for the 2-year funding period. Each project should be for no more than 2 years and it is the expectation that all funds will be expended within each award year: **no carryover of funds and no indirect costs are allowed.**

The research component is evaluated upon:

1. Significance, methodological approach, scientific merit and innovation
2. Relevance to the RFA theme: "Promoting Mobility and Independence"
3. Potential to result in subsequent larger NIH funded projects. A paragraph is required to describe the aims of the subsequent project and to outline how the research will provide data that are needed for the major grant.
4. Quality and Commitment of Primary Mentor and Mentoring Team
5. Multidisciplinary Investigative Team
6. Environment and use of Pepper Center Cores and other IoA Resources
7. Budget and timeline appropriateness
8. Early stage investigator qualifications (publications, impact of research, previous training, etc.).

Salary Support and Training

1. In addition to funding for the research component, salary support of up to \$50,000/year is allowable by the OAIC contingent upon support of 50-75% protected research time from the applicant's department chair and mentor
2. One or two highly qualified primary mentors actively participating in their mentoring and research education components
3. Access to a formal mentoring team (3-5 members total including primary mentor(s)) with whom the applicant meets at least every six months to monitor progress
4. A travel allowance of \$1500 is also available each year and will be funded separately through the OAIC
5. Priority access to OAIC research cores
6. Applicants must clearly lay out their career development plan including attendance of all OAIC seminars, CTSI seminars for early stage faculty, didactic scientific education through their research project and formal coursework
7. Awards levels are contingent upon the type of project proposed, availability of funds and approval by the OAIC External Advisory Board and the National Institute on Aging

ALLOWABLE COSTS

1. Only direct costs that support the advancement of the Statement of Work are allowed.
2. Funds awarded may not be used for indirect costs.
3. Awardees must comply with the broad policies governing Cost Accounting Standards.

PROVISIONS APPLICABLE TO DIRECT COSTS

1. Domestic travel is permitted for project-related scientific meetings to discuss or present research. All travel expenses to be reimbursed under this contract shall be in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 112.061. Foreign travel is not allowed.
2. Scientific equipment is allowed if specifically budgeted for and awarded. Each PI department will retain title to approved equipment purchased on their portion of the awarded budget.
3. General purpose office equipment is not allowed.
4. Food is not allowed, except for research purposes for research study participants.
5. Principal Investigator and key personnel salaries are not permitted (except the Research Education Scholar salary as outlined above), but supporting scientist and staff salaries are allowed.

When will applicants receive notification of award?

Notification of award is projected after **April 1st 2022**. Funds will be distributed sometime after **April 1st 2022**. The distribution of awards is contingent upon approval of the project from the local Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) as appropriate. **Applicants must consider the IRB/IACUC submission process in their timeline.** Facilitation of the IRB process is encouraged by speaking directly with Dr. Iafrate regarding a specific application. For IACUC approval, prior consultation with an ACS veterinarian is strongly encouraged.

What is the application process?

❖ Letter of Intent

A letter of intent to submit an application is due by **November 14th 2021**. The following items should be included in the letter.

1. Your name, title, email, department and college
2. Relevance to the OAIC theme described in this RFA
3. List of Core or Core's you will utilize for your project
4. Short summary, specific aims and research plan

Submit letter of intent by email to Teresa Richardson, trichar@ufl.edu, by 5PM on the due date.

You will receive application instructions if your letter of intent is accepted for this RFA.

PUBLICATIONS

Dissemination of the results developed under this contract are encouraged to be made publicly available and published in scholarly journals. All publications shall acknowledge that "Support was provided by the University of Florida Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center P30AG028740" and must be in PMCID compliance.

For additional information or clarification please contact Christiaan Leeuwenburgh (cleeuwen@ufl.edu), Roger Fillingim (rfilling@ufl.edu), or Rui Xiao, rxiao@ufl.edu for questions regarding this RFA and guidance in developing relevant research proposals. Please attend the workshop if you are interested in submitting an application.