AGING Initiative Pilot Project Grants
Frequently Asked Questions

Deadlines

- **LOI Submission Due Date:** Friday, November 13, 2020 at 11:59pm ET
- **Invitations Sent for Full Applications:** Friday, December 18, 2020
- **Full Applications Due (by invitation only):** Friday, February 26, 2021 at 11:59pm ET
- **Announcement of Awards:** Friday, April 9, 2021
- **Start Date:** Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Submission

What are the submission requirements for the letter of intent (LOI)?

LOI submissions must include the following components:

1. Specific Aims (one page)
2. Biosketch of proposed principal investigator (new NIH format)

The principal investigator on the application must be affiliated with either an OAICs or HCSRN site, or be a current or former AGING Initiative MCCs Scholar. Full specification of the study team is not required in the LOI. However, it is helpful to designate co-investigators because each study team is encouraged to have an OAIC-affiliated investigator, HCSRN-affiliated investigator, and junior investigator (see the “Investigative Roles” section for details).

What are the review criteria for the LOI?

Two reviewers will review each LOI application. In addition to the standard NIH criteria, review criteria will include:

1. Study relevance to older adults with MCCs and/or their caregivers
2. Leveraging OAIC-related data and/or the unique features of the HCSRN and its data
3. Methodological rigor and validity of findings
4. Likelihood that the proposed study will be completed within one year
5. Likelihood that the project will lead to submission of future research proposals

They will score each of the review criteria on a scale from 1 (exceptional) to 9 (poor). According to the combined score, a final determination will be made on whether an invitation will be sent for an applicant to submit a full Pilot Program Grant application. The invitation for a full application will be sent to the email address of the principal investigator.

If I receive an invitation to submit a full application, what will be the submission requirements?

Applications must be in NIH 398 format, and include the following components:

1. Face Page*
2. Abstract/Project Summary
3. Specific Aims (One Page)
4. Research Plan (Six-Page Limit; Does Not Include References or Human Subjects)
5. Human Subjects Section (If Applicable)
6. Biosketches for Key Personnel (New NIH format)
7. Detailed Budget Page*
8. Facilities & Administrative/Indirect Costs Checklist*
9. Budget Justification
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*Specified templates can be found on the online application form and on the AGING Initiative website: [https://theaginginitiative.wordpress.com/pilot-projects/](https://theaginginitiative.wordpress.com/pilot-projects/).

**What are the review criteria for the full application?**

Four reviewers, two scientific and two patient/caregiver stakeholders, will review each full application.

In addition to the standard NIH criteria, scientific review criteria will include:
1. Study relevance to older adults with MCCs and/or their caregivers
2. Leveraging OAIC-related data and/or the unique features of the HCSRN and its data
3. Methodological rigor and validity of findings
4. Likelihood that the proposed study will be completed within one year
5. Likelihood that the project will lead to submission of future research proposals

Patient/caregiver stakeholders representing the AGING Patient/Caregiver Advisory Council (APCAC) will review submissions according to the following prompt: “To what extent will the proposed research have the potential to positively impact the quality of life for older adults living with multiple chronic conditions?”

**Can a submission have multiple PIs, and if so does a multiple-PI form need to be submitted?**

Yes, you can have a multiple-PI submission. If so, NIH does require a Multiple PI form; however, it can be brief.

**Investigative Roles**

**What study team requirements are there?**

The principal investigator on the application must be affiliated with either an OAICs or HCSRN site, or be a current or former AGING Initiative MCCs Scholar. Although not a requirement, the study team is also encouraged to include the following:
1. At least one investigator affiliated with an OAIC and one affiliated with an HCSRN site (including the principal investigator).
2. At least one early career investigator (defined as not having received a major grant from NIH, AHRQ or PCORI (R01 award or equivalent). Career development (e.g., NIH K program) awardees are considered early career investigators.)

**Can an early career investigator be the principal investigator of the study?**

Yes.

**Do I need to have an investigator from the AGING Initiative on my research team?**

No.

**Can international investigators apply?**

The principal investigator of the pilot study must be both a U.S. citizen and from a U.S. institution. However, other members of the project team can be non-citizens.
Scientific

Will reviewer feedback be provided?
Yes, feedback from both the LOI and full application review will be provided for all submissions.

Can we obtain feedback from the AGING Initiative during study development?
Yes, soliciting feedback before submission is encouraged. Please send materials to Christopher Delude (Christopher.Delude@meyersrprimary.org) with your questions.

Are there specific requirements for what data are used?
No, pilot projects data may come from variety of sources including HCSRN VDW, OAIC, VA, and/or publicly available data. Data can also be from non-US sources. Original data from participants (e.g. survey or qualitative) may be collected. However, using HCSRN VDW and/or OAIC related data is strongly encouraged.

Administrative

Where did the original funding come from?
The HCSRN-OAICs AGING Initiative is funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) grant R33-AG057806. The pilot funds will be awarded through a subcontract from the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

The grantee institution (sponsor) information is as follows:
University of Massachusetts Medical School
55 Lake Avenue North
Worcester, MA 01655
(508) 856-2219
(508) 856-5004 fax
Research.funding@umassmed.edu

How will funds be distributed?
A subcontract will be issued to the primary site. It will be responsible for issuing a subcontract to the secondary site. Funds will not be distributed until IRB approval of the proposed project has been submitted to the AGING Initiative.

What indirect rate should be used?
The $40,000 budget is for total costs, both direct and indirect. Applicants are advised to adhere to their respective institutional polices related to indirect cost rates associated with federal grant submissions.

Is the NIH salary cap applicable?
Yes, the NIH salary cap is applicable to the pilot grant applications. The federal salary cap must be applied to personnel whose salaries exceed the cap.
Additional Information

Where can I find additional information about the HCSRN-OAICs AGING Initiative?
Further information regarding the initiative can be found at the following link:
https://theaginginitiative.wordpress.com/

Who should I contact with any questions?
Any inquires can be made directly to Christopher Delude at Christopher.Delude@meyersrprimary.org