

Request for Inter-NIA Center Pilot Proposals on Behavioral Change to Benefit Older Adults

Abstract

The Research Centers Collaborative Network (RCCN) is seeking to fund two or more pilot or developmental projects that involve multiple NIA-sponsored research centers to foster new research in the area of Behavior Change to Benefit Older Adults including change in the behaviors of older adults, care givers, health care providers, health care delivery systems or neighborhoods. The RCCN has set aside \$80,000 to fund at least 2 projects addressing this topic. Applications are due **March 4, 2019** with awards announced by **April 30, 2019**.

Background

This award program is sponsored by the NIA's Research Centers Collaborative Network (RCCN). The RCCN's goal is to bring together researchers from the 6 NIA Centers programs to foster the development of cross-center collaborations around issues important to the health and well-being of older adults.

The RCCN is sponsoring a series of workshops addressing specific problems of high salience to multiple NIA Center programs. These workshops feature the sharing of paradigms, conceptual models, and key insights from perspectives of the participating centers programs.

Workshop participants identify research priorities which then serve as the focus of workshop-based RFAs. The first conference, *Achieving and Sustaining Behavior Change to Benefit Older Adults*, was held December 6 – 7, 2018 at the NIA in Bethesda, Maryland. A workshop agenda, slides, and a recording of the workshop proceedings can be found at rccn-aging.org.

Priority areas identified at the workshop included:

- Promoting the systematic testing of putative mechanisms by which older adults change their behaviors.
- The need for tools to help non-behavioral scientists assess change mechanisms in their data.
- Clarifying the values and goals of older persons and their implications for intervention development.

- The application of neuroimaging and the behavioral economics of decision making to human behavioral change research.
- Identifying which cognitive functions are most critical for successful behavior change.
- Testing behavioral mechanisms by which mHealth tools support and sustain behavioral change.
- A better understanding on how events during the life course and current social network affects a person's ability to change behavior
- The role of positive affect in promoting and sustaining behavior change.
- The role of negative affect or chronic pain in inhibiting behavior change.
- Support for health care providers / health care systems to change to more effectively support older adults.
- Economic or other incentives to change provider / system behavior to better care for older adults.

Proposals on behavior change with topics outside of these priority areas will also be considered for this RFA.

Purpose

This mechanism provides funding for at least two *collaborative* pilot, planning or meeting grants supporting interdisciplinary research collaborations in the theme area. Each award will provide up to \$40,000 in direct costs. The proposals **must** include investigators representing at least two different NIA Centers Programs (Shock, Roybal, Older American Independence (Pepper), Resource Centers for Minority Aging Research, Centers for Demography and Economics of Aging, and Alzheimer's Disease Research Centers). Investigators not affiliated with NIA programs may also be included. Applications may seek support to collect or analyze data, convene experts to explore aspects of the theme area in detail, or develop multi- or interdisciplinary conceptual models to motivate further cross-center work. There must be clear evidence that all investigators will contribute importantly to the intellectual design and conduct of the research.

Applicants may propose to use the award over the course of one or two years as justified by the proposed activity. The RCCN will also include support for indirect costs at the recipient institution's NIH negotiated rate. Funding will begin **July 1, 2019**.

Eligibility

Principal investigators must be affiliated with any of the 6 NIA Center programs as confirmed by letters from the directors of the relevant Center programs. Proposals must include investigators from at **least 2 different** NIA Center programs. Proposals can be submitted by two or more Center Program investigators at the same institution or Center Program investigators at different institutions.

Applications must be relevant to the Workshop Topic generally, and ideally address questions and priorities addressed at the workshop as outlined above. Small clinical trials are eligible under this mechanism.

Application Guidelines

The following criteria are used to determine the merit of an application:

- Relevance of the proposed aims to the topic of the workshop;
- The significance and innovation of the proposed research or planning project and likelihood that it will develop into new on-going inter-center research collaborations;
- The feasibility of the proposed activities;
- Productivity of the investigators;
- Involvement of early career investigators;
- Participation of women and minorities.

Application Procedures

The deadline for receipt of all Applications is **March 4, 2019** at 5:00 p.m. EST. Please use the Application Cover Page to start your application. Incomplete applications cannot be considered. All applications must be submitted via email to contact@rccn-aging.org. The applications will be reviewed by the RCCN Steering committee and independent reviewers selected by the American Federation for Aging Research. Applicants will be notified by **April 30, 2019**. The anticipated award start date is **July 1, 2019**. RCCN will not provide reviewer critiques to any applicants at any review level.

Questions regarding this RFA can be sent to: Elizabeth Pritchett-Montavon elizabeth@afar.org. Click [here](#) for our Frequently Asked Questions page. A conference call to discuss the RFA will be held at January 23, 2019 at 4:00 pm ET. Please check the [RCCN website](#) for details.

Requests for Support should be submitted as a single PDF document, using 12 point font and single-spaced. The application must include the following and in this order:

- Page 1: [Application Cover Page](#)
- Page 2: Abstract
- Page 3 – 7: Narrative describing the proposed activity or activities. The narrative should include the hypotheses/rationale, specific aims, brief preliminary data (if any), an implementation plan/research strategy and proposed methods, timeline and expected outcomes and next steps.
- Page 8-9: A budget and budget justification
- NIH-style bios-sketches for the key investigators
- Additional supporting materials up to two documents, and only if directly relevant to the proposed project and not to exceed 5 pages.

Award and Reporting Requirements

Funding will be awarded via a subcontract from Wake Forest School of Medicine. Joint pilot projects should be led by investigators from 2 or more Centers programs. One of the investigators should be identified as the primary (i.e., contact) investigator. NIA approval of pilot projects involving human subjects or animals will occur according to the procedures used at the primary investigator's Center. All questions regarding the award should be directed to the contact listed on the notice of award.

Applicants should note that IRB certification (for human subjects) and/or Animal Use Committee approval (for animal subjects) must be provided before a grant award can be made.

Awardees are required to submit annual progress report with a final narrative and financial reports.

Timeline

- Application Deadline: March 4, 2019
- Review: March – April 2019
- Selection and announcement: April 30, 2019
- Start Date: July 1, 2019



About the RCCN

Managed by [Wake Forest School of Medicine](#) and the [American Federation for Aging Research \(AFAR\)](#), the RCCN promotes multi-disciplinary efforts in aging research across the centers through: conferences, pilot programs, early career faculty education, web-based resource identification tools, and fundraising/proposal development. To find out more go to: rccn-aging.org

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