

Boston Claude D. Pepper Older Americans Independence Center



February 2022

Re: Call for Pilot Project and Career Development applications in Aging-Related Research
From: Shalender Bhasin, MD, PI and Director, Boston Pepper Center
Monty Montano, PhD, Scientific Director, Boston Pepper Center

Key Dates:

Application due date: **April 04, 2022**

Notification on or before: **May 09, 2022**

Earliest funding start date: **September 05, 2022**

The Boston Older Americans Independence Center (OAIC) is pleased to invite applications for 2 core awards, the Pilot/Exploratory Studies Core (PESC) and Research Education Core (REC) Awards. These awards are designed to attract research in biological aging and functional independence. PESC awards are relatively small grants for established investigators who need pilot data to prepare for larger research grants focused on the OAIC theme, and REC awards are for the early career development of talented postdoctoral trainees to help prepare them for future K or equivalent grants. The Boston OAIC (a.k.a. "Boston Pepper Center") is a NIA-funded collaborative research program among investigators from Harvard Medical School and affiliated hospitals, Boston University and Tufts University. Scientists from any of these institutions or their affiliates are invited to apply.

The awards should focus on the Boston OAIC theme: "Function Promoting Therapies."

This theme includes, but is not limited to the following areas of research:

- Causes, prevention, and treatment of age-related functional limitations/specific disabilities in older adults
- Interventions to ameliorate functional limitations and disability in older adults, including drugs, devices, and behavioral approaches.
- Novel approaches for the measurement of function
- Studies of the mechanisms of functional decline that have the potential for facilitating drug discovery
- High throughput strategies for identifying novel therapeutic agents
- Novel statistical or data-driven approaches for analyzing epidemiological data and high dimensional biological data related to the OAIC theme

ELIGIBILITY:

- **Rank.**
 - PESC Awards are for investigators at any stage of their career.
 - REC Awards are for junior faculty investigators at the pre-K award stage of their career.
- **Scientific merit.** The proposed study must advance scientific knowledge in the area of the OAIC theme
- **Translational approach.** The proposed research will catalyze the development of interventions to prevent functional limitations in older people
- **Future extramural funding.** Priority will be given to projects with the potential to lead to larger, more definitive studies that are competitive for extramural funding
- **Utilization of multiple OAIC Resource Cores.** The Pepper Center has multiple research support cores (see <http://pepper.bwh.harvard.edu/>). Applications must utilize Pepper Center Cores and acknowledge their contributions in future publications and grant applications.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

- The PESC application should include a) an abstract (30 lines), b) scientific proposal not to exceed three pages, c) an NIH biosketch and d) a budget. We welcome applications from all disciplines.
- The REC application should include the above, as well as an additional page describing the candidate's career development plan and qualifications of the mentor in the field of aging. The mentor's NIH biosketch should also

be included. The career development plan should take advantage of resources and coursework provided by the OAIC and Harvard Catalyst.

- The scientific proposal for both awards should include specific aims, hypotheses, background, relevance to functional limitations and disability in older adults, the interdisciplinary and translational nature of the project, research methods, analysis, and sample size justification.
- Formatting guidelines: Please use 11-point font or larger, do not include appendix material and note that cited references are not counted in the overall page limit.

Roybal joint funding. This RFA encourages applications that leverage expertise and resources at the Boston Pepper Center (<http://pepper.bwh.harvard.edu/>) and expertise and resources at the Boston Roybal Center for Active Lifestyle Interventions <http://www.brandeis.edu/roybal/>. Applications that utilize both Centers and plan to include behavioral assessments and interventions to increase physical activity in older adults will be considered for joint funding.

Duration of the Project: 2 years*

Budget: Varying amounts for two years depending upon availability of funds. PESC candidates are encouraged to submit a budget not to exceed \$30,000 annually with the understanding that the funded amount may be lower. REC candidates should submit an annual budget of \$50,000 in total direct costs, with approximately 50% of the award supporting the applicant's effort and career development activities.

How to submit the application:

Please submit your application as a single combined PDF to Lizbeth Torres, ltorres8@bwh.harvard.edu.

Questions: Should you have any questions, please, e-mail them to the Principal Investigator (Shalender Bhasin, MD) at sbhasin@bwh.harvard.edu or the Scientific Director (Monty Montano, PhD) at mmontano@bwh.harvard.edu.