

**MiCDA Annual Pilot Project Competition**  
**Call for Proposals**  
**Release Date: August 6, 2024**  
**Proposals Due Date: August 26, 2024**

The **Michigan Center on the Demography of Aging (MiCDA)** announces its annual pilot project competition. MiCDA is one of 12 research centers on behavioral and social aspects of aging funded by the National Institute on Aging. MiCDA expects to include funds in its upcoming renewal proposal for 2-3 pilot projects for 2025-2026. Applicants may request up to \$40k in direct costs.

Proposed pilots should focus on one of MiCDA's signature themes: (1) The changing demography of late-life disability, dementia and family caregiving; (2) Biosocial determinants over the life course of inequities in health and wellbeing in later life; and (3) Enriching data infrastructure and methods to promote breakthroughs in the demography of aging.

Proposals that focus on health disparities, broadly defined, are especially encouraged.

This year, we are soliciting projects in two tracks. Each track has different eligibility criteria and requirements.

**Track 1: Emerging Scholars Pilot Projects and Mentorship Program**

**Eligibility**

Applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- hold a faculty position in the research professor, professor, scientist or clinical tracks or a post-doctoral fellow or research investigator position at the University of Michigan, or
- hold a faculty or post-doctoral fellow position at other institutions and have an active collaboration with a MiCDA affiliate (e.g., as a co-investigator or supplement candidate or coauthor).

In addition, applicants must meet [NIH's criteria](#) for early stage investigator (ESI) or new investigator (NI).

**Expected Outcomes**

Emerging Scholar Pilot Projects are expected to result in multiple presentations and at least one published paper. Pilots also may lead to new data resources, study cohorts, or protocols.

New this year, the Emerging Scholar Pilot Project program will include a formal mentorship program. The program is designed to assist recipients in developing the knowledge base to submit a grant application to NIA related to their pilot topic within two years of receipt.

## **Other Requirements**

Pilot project recipients must name a MiCDA affiliate who has agreed to mentor them on the submission of a grant proposal to NIA related to their pilot topic. MiCDA expects to be able to directly cover mentorship time (~1-2 weeks) for the purposes of guiding the recipient on the development of an NIA grant application. Applicants do not need to include funds for mentorship effort in their proposed budgets.

Pilot project recipients are also expected to participate in MiCDA's monthly early career development program designed to familiarize applicants with the NIH grant proposal submission process.

Pilot recipients are also expected to present results at an annual MiCDA symposium and to cite MiCDA as a source of funding support for any publications or presentations that emerge from funding (P30AG012846). Recipients are also expected to respond to all inquiries requesting information on pilot activities and meet any additional requirements required by NIA.

## **Track 2: Innovation Pilot Projects**

### **Eligibility**

Applicants must meet the following qualifications:

- hold a faculty position in the research professor, professor, scientist or clinical tracks or a post-doctoral fellow or research investigator position at the University of Michigan, and
- be a current or new MiCDA affiliate. Eligibility criteria and instructions for obtaining a MiCDA affiliation are available through the MiCDA website at: <https://micda.isr.umich.edu/micda-people/become-an-affiliate/>

### **Expected Outcomes**

Innovative Pilot Projects are expected to result in multiple presentations and at least one published paper. Pilots also may lead to new data resources, study cohorts, or protocols. Often pilot recipients go on to submit successful grant applications related to their pilot work.

### **Other Requirements**

Innovation pilots must either test a new method or technique not already widely used in the field and/or conduct primary data collection focused on one of MiCDA's signature themes.

Pilot recipients are also expected to present results at the annual MiCDA symposium and to cite MiCDA as a source of funding support for any publications or presentations that emerge from funding (P30AG012846). Recipients are also expected to respond to all inquiries requesting information on pilot activities and meet any additional requirements required by NIA.

## **Both Tracks: Submission Details**

## **Budget**

We expect projects will be supported for 1 year, from July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026. Applicants may request up to \$40,000 in direct costs. Expenses can include salary and associated fringe costs, research staff (data analyst, research assistant), data collection costs, travel costs, and materials and supplies necessary for the proposed research. Researchers external to the University of Michigan may include indirect costs in addition to direct costs in their budget.

## **Review Criteria/Priority**

1. Review criteria will focus on significance/innovation and feasibility of approach.
2. Priority will be given to projects that are likely to advance research around MiCDA's research themes, with a clear emphasis on social and behavioral aspects of health and wellbeing of older adults.
3. Priority will also be given to projects that seed innovative research, have the potential to produce publications that advance the Center's signature research themes, are likely to serve as a foundation for external funding (e.g., NIH K99/K01, R03, R21, or R01), and can be completed over a 12-month period.

## **Applications**

**Proposals.** Applicants should submit by **August 26, 2024** through the online application portal available at <https://micda.isr.umich.edu/programs>.

The full proposal should include:

- 1) Project Summary (1 paragraph)
- 2) Specific Aims (1 page limit)
- 3) Research Strategy (2 page limit, excluding references) that covers significance, innovation, approach, and outcomes and references; please include a brief statement as to how your pilot relates to one of MiCDA's signature themes;
- 4) The following NIH Forms, available at the [NIH website](#): PHS Budget page and justification; NIH biosketches (non-fellowship) for key personnel; and if your project involves human subjects, the PHS human subjects and clinical trials information form
- 5) For Track 1 only: A brief memo from your MiCDA mentor stating their willingness to provide substantive guidance on a proposal related to your pilot project.

## **Deadlines**

Submit full proposals by Monday, **August 26, 2024**

Decisions are expected to be made by Friday, **Aug 30, 2024**.

Please note that pilot funding is contingent upon available funding, NIA approval, IRB approval and, for projects with a foreign component, foreign clearance by the US State Department.

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