



## Request for Applications

**Applications are being accepted for the period 7/01/2024 - 6/30/2025**

Penn's [Center for Improving Care Delivery for the Aging \(CICADA\)](#) is seeking applications for the 2024-2025 cohort of CICADA Scientists. In collaboration with Penn's [Leonard Davis Institute for Health Economics \(LDI\)](#), CICADA seeks to enhance the diversity of the aging research workforce by mentoring promising scientists from under-represented backgrounds interested in a career focused on improving health equity and health care delivery for older adults.

Up to three Scientists will be accepted into CICADA for the current cycle. Each Scientist will receive funding of up to \$50,000 to conduct a 1-year research project, hands-on mentoring, career development support, and networking opportunities during the award period. See [the CICADA website](#) to learn about the full set of resources available to CICADA Scientists.

If you have any questions about the center or this RFA, please contact us at [CICADA@pennterms.upenn.edu](mailto:CICADA@pennterms.upenn.edu).

### WHAT IS CICADA?

CICADA is Penn's NIA-funded Resource Center for Minority Aging Research ([RCMAR](#)), a national program focused on enhancing the diversity of the workforce focused on research in aging by mentoring promising scientists from under-represented groups for sustained careers in aging and health equity research. The ultimate goal of the RCMARs is to increase the number of researchers focused on health disparities and the health and well-being of minoritized older adults.

CICADA focuses on training researchers in the priority areas of social, behavioral, and economic research on aging, addressing issues of health equity, care quality, access, and affordability using the methods of health economics and health services research, including quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, and implementation science approaches. Because CICADA is housed within LDI, CICADA Scientists benefit from the resources available through LDI's extensive network of mentors and scholars, research infrastructure, and translation and dissemination support.

## WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Candidates from groups that are underrepresented in the field of health services research (African American, Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Pacific Islander), first-generation college students, individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds, individuals with disabilities, and individuals who identify as LGBTQIA are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applications are being accepted from post-doctoral researchers and junior faculty who are underrepresented in research. This includes (1) MD (or equivalent) and MD/PhD clinical fellows who have completed their residency, (2) PhD postdoctoral trainees, and (3) MD/PhD, MD, or PhD early-stage faculty [defined as instructor or early-stage assistant professor for less than 3 years at time of application] who are underrepresented, based on the [NIH's Diversity Statement](#).

Scientists need not have conducted aging research before, but they must be committed to developing new research skills in health services research focused on aging. Applicants can be affiliated with any U.S. university and is not limited to those with Penn affiliations.

## RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO AWARDED CICADA SCIENTISTS

- Funding of up to \$50,000 to complete a one-year research project
  - Research funds can support salary, research expenses, travel, equipment, and/or supplies as appropriate to the project.
  - Any sub-contracts (including indirect costs of up to 8%) must be included in the budgeted amount.
- Mentoring, including:
  - Standardized mentoring protocols, including goal setting and group mentoring meetings, as well as personnel and collaborator management
  - Professional development, including job talk or presentation preparation
- CICADA-specific programming, including:
  - Monthly seminars from CICADA's expert faculty, including content on data management, statistical analysis plans, qualitative research, and giving effective presentations
  - Works in Progress meetings to discuss CICADA Scientist research findings
  - Academic and professional networking opportunities
  - Grant writing training and resources
  - Research award administration and research project management
  - Participation in Penn's [Implementation Science Institute](#), a four half-day bootcamp delivered virtually each June (next delivery June 11-14, 2024)
- Appointment to Penn LDI as a Fellow, including many [resources](#) available to LDI Fellows
- Becoming part of the growing community of CICADA Scientists with access to CICADA programming after the 1-year support period

## FOCUS OF RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Support will be given for 1-year pilot research projects that are focused on issues of health equity, quality, access, and/or affordability for older adults using the methods of health economics or health services research.
- Projects that leverage the data available through LDI and CICADA's Analysis Core will be given priority. More details on our resources are available [online](#).
- The proposed project should lead to publication of at least one first-authored, peer-

reviewed manuscript. Priority will be given to projects that will lead to subsequent funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), particularly the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

## REVIEW CRITERIA FOR APPLICATIONS

- Quality and rigor of proposed research
- Relatedness of proposed research to CICADA's focus and use of LDI/CICADA data resources
- Likelihood that proposed research would lead to subsequent NIH-funded projects, particularly NIA-funded projects
- Credentials and promise of the investigator in aging-related research

## APPLICATION TIMELINE

1. Applications are due prior to **8 am ET on January 8, 2024**, and can be submitted [here](#).
2. Candidates will be notified if they have been selected **by February 19, 2024**. At that time successful applicants will be asked to supply supporting documents (including, but not limited to, IRB approval, human subjects training, enrollment reporting, and other requested materials).
3. Project support will start **July 1, 2024**.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Applicants must complete and submit the following required documents by **8 am ET on January 8, 2024**:

- Complete the required online application form using the require form [here](#).
- Upload the following required documents with the online application form:
  1. **Cover page** including Project Title, Principal Investigator, Mentor(s), and Abstract (not to exceed 250 words)
  2. **Project Description** (up to five pages, single-spaced, 11-point font minimum one-inch margins) which contains the following sections:
    - a. **Specific aim(s) and significance** (with specific hypotheses) (~1 page)
    - b. **Research plan and methodology** (~2.5 pages)
      - Should include a description of the data to be used or how the data will be collected; key variables and how they will be measured or defined; and an detailed analysis plan.
    - c. **Project timeline and milestones** (e.g., Gantt chart) Milestones should be identified along the 1-year timeline. Milestones should be well described, quantifiable, and scientifically justified benchmarks at critical junctures. This section may also include alternative strategies should any component efforts fail to perform as expected. (~0.5 pages)
    - d. **How this proposal is related to CICADA's focus** (~1 page)
      - How the proposed research project is related to CICADA's research focus on improving health equity and health care delivery for older adults
      - How the proposed research project will inform the applicant's future research and how it will lead to larger funding by the NIH/NIA or another agency

- A description of the applicant, including career objectives and how CICADA support would help achieve those objectives
  - Proposed mentor(s) and a statement about their involvement and the role they will play in conducting the research project and supporting the applicant's career objectives. Applicants without mentors who have a potential project should email CICADA at [CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu) for assistance in identifying a mentor in advance of the application deadline
3. **Project Budget**
    - Proposals must include an itemized budget of up to \$50,000.
    - An accompanying budget justification should clearly describe and justify the specific items to be funded by the grant.
    - A budget template can be accessed [here](#).
  4. **Applicant's current Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
  5. **Mentors' *abbreviated* Biosketch(es)** with selected relevant experience and publications (not to exceed 2 pages)

Please contact [CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu](mailto:CICADA@pennmedicine.upenn.edu) with any questions.