



Longer Life Foundation:

An RGA/Washington University Partnership

***Call for Applications:
Developmental Research Awards - 2019***

Background:

A joint enterprise of Washington University in St. Louis School of Medicine and Reinsurance Group of America, Incorporated (RGA), the Longer Life Foundation has as its mission:

To study factors that assist in predicting mortality and morbidity of selected populations and to research methods to promote improvements in longevity and health by analyzing the effects of changes in medicine and advances in public health practices.

Scope of work:

The Foundation announces the 2019 Call for Applications for Washington University in St. Louis faculty for Pilot and Feasibility Research Projects addressing topics related to the Foundation mission. We are looking to fund research studying determinants of long-term prognoses for common human ailments. Preference is given to clinical research that involves the potential for new discoveries rather than the implementation of existing therapeutic strategies. We also fund studies that investigate methods to improve disease prognosis or prevent ailments from occurring, thereby improving quality and quantity of life. However, these studies should involve diseases that are specifically known either to shorten life expectancy or pose a significant risk for shortening life. We are interested in individual pilot and feasibility studies as well as pilot projects that are a component of larger or established studies, such as analyses of existing databases.

General areas of interest include *but are not limited to*:

- Prognosticators of disease progression, survival and longevity
- Mechanisms or interventions that prevent disease and promote longevity
- The impact of common co-morbid conditions on outcomes in diseases that shorten the lifespan
- Cancer screening and tumor markers
- Determinants to further understand the aging process
- Physical and cognitive/mental impairments in older adults and their effect on disease severity and survival
- Obesity and its impact on health

Examples of specific topics of interest include *but are not limited to*:

- Tracking and predicting short- and long-term population mortality rates and life expectancies
- Risk factors and identifiers of opioid dependence
- Reversibility and curability of DM 2 with diet and other interventions
- Long-term impact of anti-microbial resistance on mortality and morbidity
- Short- and long-term health implications of vaping
- Pandemic risk modeling and ways of mitigating catastrophic outcomes
- Impact of genomics on the taxonomy of disease and, in particular, the future of cancer staging and cancer prognosis
- Modeling mortality through the use of non-traditional risk factors
- Tools for pre-clinical screening and early identification of cognitive impairment
- Impact of the 4th Universal Definition of Myocardial Infarction (released 2018) on incidence, intervention, and outcomes of myocardial injury

General criteria for evaluation:

Following are several criteria that are considered during Longer Life Foundation’s review of grant applications. These criteria are in addition to the topic selected. One or more of these criteria should be considered for inclusion in each application, if consistent with the proposal. No one criterion is more important than any other:

- Applicability to broad audiences or populations
- Elucidation of mechanism of disease, even if patient population is not large
- Enhancement of length or quality of life
- Clear pathway and suggested time line outlined to achieve clinical application
- Primary prevention of a particular disease or disability and prevention of sequelae or complications of disease
- Applications from researchers with international collaborators are encouraged
- Application of new technologies to questions related to The Longer Life Foundation mission

More information on the Longer Life Foundation and a listing of past funded studies can be found on the Foundation’s website: www.longerlife.org.

Who is eligible?

1. Young investigators with at least two years of research experience who are interested in longevity related research and have yet to obtain independent funding.
2. Established investigators who are developing a new direction in research on determinants of health and longevity.

Investigators must have an M.D., Ph.D. or similar degree in their field and have an affiliation with Washington University in St. Louis. Post-doctoral fellows are not eligible.

Awards:

In 2019, up to five grants will be awarded. The project period will be October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020, and the amount of funding for each grant will be between \$20,000 and \$50,000 (**direct costs**). Following the review of proposals for scientific merit, budgets may be negotiated with individual investigators. A second year of funding may be requested, and will require submission of a competing renewal application in the 2020 grant cycle, demonstration of satisfactory progress and justification for a second year of funding.

Terms of awards:

All applications must have appropriate institutional regulatory approval submitted with the proposal. Grantees will meet with the Chairman of LLF's Scientific Review Committee at the beginning of the project period to discuss their study, and again at six months to review their progress and future plans for the research. Grantees are required to submit a final report at the completion of their study, or a progress report after a year of funding if a no-cost extension is requested and approved. This report will be posted on the Longer Life Foundation's website. Grantees are asked to inform the Foundation when their research is published by peer-reviewed publications, and all publications should acknowledge support from the Longer Life Foundation: A RGA/Washington University Partnership.

Dates:

- Letters of Intent are due by midnight of February 22, 2019
- Decisions regarding approval to submit a formal application will be provided by April 19, 2019
- Applications are due by midnight of May 31, 2019
- Notification of awards will be made by September 3, 2019
- Funding begins October 1, 2019

Application Procedure:

Investigators interested in applying for funding **MUST** submit a Letter of Intent, and only those investigators whose letters pass that level of review will be invited to submit a full application. All Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the Foundation's Scientific Review Committee and Advisory Group. Decisions to invite an investigator to submit or not submit a full application are based upon the relevance of the research to the Foundation's mission and the number of grants that can be awarded that year. All investigators are provided with feedback about the award decision.

Letter of Intent

Letters of Intent are due by midnight, February 22, 2019. The letter should include the following:

1. One- to two-page description, including project title, aims, method of approach, relevance to the mission of the Longer Life Foundation and Scope of Work.
2. NIH-format biographical sketch

The Letter of Intent and biographical sketch should be submitted as a **SINGLE** electronic file.

Please submit Letters of Intent to:

Dan Zimmerman, M.D. dzimmerman@rgare.com

David Alpers, M.D. dalpers@wustl.edu; cc: Rachel Hauck rhauck@wustl.edu

Letters of Intent will be reviewed and feedback will be provided by April 19, 2019.

Applications

Applications must be submitted before midnight on May 31, 2019. The application should be submitted in a **SINGLE** electronic file and must include:

1. Title of proposed study
2. Abstract
3. Summary and description in lay language
4. NIH-format biographical sketch. Please provide information about other support.
5. Research plan (6 pages maximum excluding references and budget). Please include:
 - a. Specific aims
 - b. Scope of work and relevance of project to the mission of the Foundation
 - c. Background and significance
 - d. Preliminary data or progress report if applying for a second year of funding
 - e. Research design and methods
6. Plans for obtaining additional extramural funding arising from the proposed research
7. References
8. Budget and budget justification
9. OSRS Institutional Official Approval letter

Additional instructions:

Format: Single-spaced, 11- or 12-point font

Header: Title of research, investigator's name

Please submit completed application to:

Dan Zimmerman M.D. dzimmerman@rgare.com

David Alpers M.D. dalpers@wustl.edu cc: Rachel Hauck rhauck@wustl.edu

For a copy of the Regulations Governing Grants from the Longer Life Foundation or additional information, please email Rachel Hauck at rhauck@wustl.edu.