UCLA RCMAR Center for Health Innovation and Maximizing Eldercare (CHIME) and
UCLA Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI)
Pilot Project Award 2026-27

Applications are being accepted for one-year Pilot Project Awards of
up to $55,000 for the project period 07/01/2026 - 06/30/2027

Who Should Apply: We accept applications from entry-level and mid-level faculty, as well as postdoctoral fellows. Applicants must have a faculty or postdoctoral fellow appointment between July 1, 2026, and June 30, 2027, at UCLA or another academic institution/organization in Southern California. Funded applicants will conduct a pilot research project focused on older adults. RCMAR Pilot-Project Awards are designed to meet the career development needs of scholars who have a demonstrated commitment to addressing health outcomes among older adult populations who experience high rates of disease burden or risk and/or scholars who are transitioning their existing research on populations who experience high rates of disease burden or risk to that of older adults. All eligible candidates are welcome to apply. People who have received RCMAR funding in the past and are considering applying should contact the UCLA Program Administrator, Cristina Punzalan (cpunzalan@mednet.ucla.edu).

Funding Amount Available: Three (3) one-year project awards are available. The maximum funding available per pilot project is $55,000: up to $25,000 from the RCMAR CHIME (NIH/NIA Grant #P30-AG021684) and up to $30,000 from the CTSI (NIH/NCATS Grant #UL1TR001881).

Focus of Pilot Projects: Priority will be given to pilot projects that show the most promise for improving health and healthcare among older adult populations with high disease burden/risk. Projects must have a focus on behavioral, psychological, social, or economic research on aging and/or health in older adults. Funded pilot projects may involve primary data collection or secondary data analysis. Ideally, pilot projects should demonstrate effective inter-institutional or academic-community partnerships and lead to the publication of at least one first-authored, peer-reviewed manuscript, along with a subsequent submission of a research proposal to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), ideally the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

Note: We **cannot** fund pilot projects involving clinical trials (https://grants.nih.gov/policy/clinical-trials.htm), or projects focused on basic science or clinical research (a branch of medical science that determines the safety and effectiveness of medications, devices, diagnostic products, and treatment regimens intended for human use).

Pilot project recipients will become RCMAR CHIME Scientists and will benefit from the mentorship of RCMAR CHIME-affiliated faculty and the rich RCMAR CHIME alumni network. RCMAR CHIME Scientists are expected to attend monthly meetings that include a methodological seminar and a works-in-progress session. These meetings are held on the third Wednesday afternoon of each month. During these meetings, RCMAR CHIME scientists receive feedback on their projects, manuscripts, or grant applications. RCMAR CHIME scientists may also be selected to present their work at biannual Scientific Retreats and at national meetings, which provide an excellent opportunity for networking and obtaining feedback on projects and career advice. The RCMAR CHIME also strongly supports and guides scientists conducting community-based participatory research in Southern California.

**UCLA RCMAR Center for Health Innovation and Maximizing Eldercare (CHIME) and
UCLA Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI)
Pilot Project Award 2026-27**

<u>**Application Timeline:**</u>
1. **By noon PT on November 3, 2025**, applicants <u>must</u> submit an online application on the RCMAR CHIME website – **https://chime.med.ucla.edu/apply** – and upload the required supporting documents (see page 2 for required documents).
2. **By November 24, 2025**, candidates will be notified if they have been selected to prepare and submit a full proposal and supporting documents.
3. **By January 23, 2026**, selected candidates <u>must</u> submit the full proposal with supporting documents, including a six-page, single-spaced research plan, a detailed budget, and other requested documents.
4. **By the week of February 2, 2026,** selected candidates will meet with RCMAR CHIME Program Directors for an in-person (preferred) or Zoom interview.
5. Applicants whose proposals are selected for funding will be notified as soon as possible (by February 23, 2026). Successful applicants will complete additional supporting documents that will be forwarded to the NIH/NIA for final approval in March 2026. The award will be disbursed after July 1, 2026.

<u>**Application Submission and Required Documents:**</u> Applicants <u>must</u> complete and submit the following <u>required</u> documents by **noon PT on November 3, 2025**:
1. Complete the <u>required</u> online application form on the RCMAR CHIME website **https://chime.med.ucla.edu/apply** and
2. Upload the following <u>required</u> documents as <u>Microsoft Word</u> files on the RCMAR CHIME online application.
    A. **A synopsis describing the proposed pilot project.** The synopsis <u>must</u> be single-spaced in Arial font with 11-point typeface, half-inch margins, on 8.5"x11"-size paper, limited to a maximum of two pages, and <u>must</u> include:
        i.   Title of the project;
        ii. Description of the proposed pilot project, including a brief description of the design and data to be collected or used in the pilot project;
        iii. Participation from at least one stakeholder, either in an advisory capacity or as a full research team member, is required. Depending on the project's focus, stakeholders may include community partners, patients, caregivers, frontline clinical providers, health systems, or other relevant parties. Please describe how you plan to incorporate meaningful engagement with one or more stakeholders or stakeholder groups that inform some aspect of the research process—including topic selection, study design, and final dissemination of results.
        iv. A specific statement about how the proposed pilot project meets the two main goals of the RCMAR CHIME Program: 1) contributes to the improvement in health for older adults and 2) advances the academic and research career of pilot scientists who focus on aging research.
        v.   A brief timeline that documents the feasibility of completing the pilot project in one year;
        vi. A specific statement about how this pilot project will inform the applicant's future research and how it will lead to larger funding by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) or another agency;
        vii. Describe your career development needs as a scholar with a demonstrated commitment to addressing aging health outcomes among older adult populations who experience high rates of

disease burden or risk or as a scholar who is transitioning your existing research to that of older populations experiencing high rates of disease burden or risk.

viii. A description of the applicant and their role on the proposed pilot project; and

ix. Proposed mentor(s) and their title and affiliations, along with a statement about their involvement and the role they will play in conducting the pilot project.

B. **Applicant's NIH Biosketch in the current format**.

C. **All Mentors' and/or senior key personnel's NIH Biosketch in the current format**.

D. **Institutional Letter of Support.** You <u>must</u> submit an institutional letter of support from your department chair or division chief confirming that you will have an entry- or mid-level faculty appointment between 07/01/2026 and 06/30/2027 and adequate protected time to conduct your proposed pilot project.

Please contact us at rcmarchime@mednet.ucla.edu with any questions.

For more information about the RCMAR/CHIME and the UCLA CTSI, visit **https://chime.med.ucla.edu/** and **https://www.ctsi.ucla.edu/**. The online application can also be found here:
https://uclahs.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0JtpFLmC7iXHY34