

Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging (CEDA):

“Innovation Pilot” Research Proposals

Priority Deadline: February 1, 2026

The UC Berkeley Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging (CEDA) <https://www.populationsciences.berkeley.edu/ceda> is pleased to announce a new call for Innovation Pilots. (Early career scholars should also see [our website](#) for our related call for Emerging Scholar Pilots.)

Awards will generally be from \$5,000 to \$30,000 over 1-2 years.

Innovation Pilot Proposals submitted by February 1, 2026 will be given priority consideration, but proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year.

We invite pilot proposals that will advance aging research in demography, economics, and related interdisciplinary population-based social science areas. We will prioritize those in areas of population studies encompassed by CEDA’s mission, including CEDA’s signature themes:

- Mortality measurement
- Policy and behavioral determinants of adult population health
- Biodemography of aging
- Macro consequences of global aging

Innovation Pilots will support researchers at any stage who are conducting highly innovative aging research for which pilot funding is necessary to test ideas and demonstrate feasibility to support strong extramural grant proposals (especially R-series proposals to NIH’s National Institute on Aging). Innovation Pilots must test a new method or technique, and/or conduct primary data collection related to CEDA signature themes (secondary data analyses are otherwise not allowed). Applicants must be CEDA affiliates—other potential applicants interested in CEDA affiliation should be eligible for Principal Investigator (PI) status at Berkeley or a nearby institution.

Proposal topics must be eligible for NIH funding, thus the proposed research should focus primarily on health outcomes, health-related behaviors, and other health and demographic determinants. <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-16-025.html>. NIH funds may not be used to support activities including diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) research programs, gender ideology, COVID-19, or climate change research or related research training activities or programs. However, [solutions-oriented health disparities research is still](#)

[encouraged](#). These NIH policies are nuanced and subject to change, so please contact us if you are unsure whether your research is suitable.

Eligibility: Must have or be eligible for PI status at UC Berkeley, or if at another institution, be a CEDA member

Timeline: There is no deadline to submit a proposal. CEDA will review proposals throughout the year, and send promising proposals to the advisory committee for selection. If recommended for funding, CEDA will submit the proposal to CEDA's funder, the National Institute on Aging (NIA) for approval. The project start date will begin when the award letter is received from NIA, and will continue for 1-2 years. The entire process from submission to CEDA to an NIA award letter will typically be 4 months, but can be faster or slower depending on circumstances.

Application Format and Process: Submit a proposal per the instructions below, including a budget. E-mail the completed proposal to ceda@berkeley.edu. For preliminary feedback on your proposal idea please contact CEDA Director Will Dow (wdow@berkeley.edu)

Pilot Grant Proposal Instructions

Proposals should be about two to four pages single-spaced (not including references, budget, and human subjects details).

Please include all of the following information in your proposal:

1. Identifying Information

Identify the lead investigator, collaborating investigators, and the departments or units they represent. Contact information must be included for all investigators.

2. Title of Proposal

3. Brief Aims and Background

List specific aims. Provide a brief background and purpose of the project including its significance, innovation, and relevance to NIA/CEDA priority research areas.

4. Description of Activities

Provide a description of the specific activities.

5. Prospects for Extramural Funding

Detail how the proposed activities will contribute to the development of a research proposal to outside sponsors, ideally an NIA grant such as R01/R21/R03 funding, but it is allowable to target other funders. Be sure to identify prospective funders and how the proposed research topic fits with their priorities.

6. Timeline

Describe the anticipated timeline to accomplish the goals of the proposal. Also, please indicate the timeline for the development and submission of grant proposals for external

funding. Pilots are generally designed to be completed within one year, but a two-year timeline may be requested.

7. Budget

The requested budget for Innovation Pilots can be anywhere between \$5,000 - \$30,000 in direct costs over 1-2 years (inclusive of subawardee indirect costs at 8%).

Provide a brief explanation of how the requested funds will be spent, based on the activities to be conducted, e.g.:

- Data acquisition or collection
- Investigator salary (if state-funded faculty, generally limited to only assistant professors)
- Research assistants (including tuition benefits if applicable).

If the proposal is selected, a detailed budget will be required with the help from campus research administration staff.

Due to changes in NIH [foreign subaward policy](#), pilots with foreign subawards will not be able to be funded until further notice. Pilots with foreign consultants are still eligible.

8. Human Subjects

Please indicate if your research involves human subjects. If you already have human subjects approval, please attach the approval letter (or exemption letter if applicable). If not yet approved, please indicate the timing and status of IRB submission and review. It is the obligation of the PI to comply with all campus and government regulations on human subjects research. See <https://cphs.berkeley.edu/review.html> and <https://cphs.berkeley.edu/reviewtypes.html> for more information.

9. Biosketches

Please include the NIH biosketch or CV of all key personnel on the pilot.