

The Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment in Gerontology Faculty Awards

The Pearl Aldrich Faculty Research Awards are funded by the Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment in Gerontology. These one-year awards are competitive and intended to support Michigan State University faculty committed to gerontology or geriatric research. Awards must have a clearly identifiable focus related to gerontology or geriatric medicine.

FACULTY APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

All Michigan State University faculty are eligible except for current members of the Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment Advisory Committee. This category applies to salaried or volunteer employees of Michigan State University or its affiliated institutions holding a prefixed or non-prefixed academic rank of assistant, associate, or full professor. Community-based faculty with an MSU appointment are eligible to apply.

CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED IN SELECTION OF FACULTY AWARDEES

- ☐ Importance of the research area to advancing the field of gerontology or geriatric medicine
- ☐ Quality and feasibility of the research project
- ☐ Evidence of the investigator's commitment to the project
- ☐ collaborative and/or interdisciplinary activity
- ☐ Nature and extent of involvement of investigator in prior aging research activities
- ☐ Evidence of the investigator's commitment to academic and professional development in gerontology or geriatric medicine

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The project proposal should address a research question that has unambiguous relevance to the field of gerontology or geriatrics. Quantitative and qualitative research proposals may be submitted. Collaborative, and interdisciplinary research proposals are encouraged that have a strong likelihood of obtaining future extramural funding. The scope of the project must be appropriate for completion in one-year. Extensions and Carry-over funding is not available due to conditions of the endowment.

RESEARCH PROJECT FUNDING

Grant awards up to \$20,000 may be requested. The funding cycle for all award recipients begins on July 1, 2025 and ends on June 30, 2026. Funding may **not** be used to support salaries and benefits, graduate assistantships and course/teaching buyouts. Funding will adhere to MSU guidelines. Faculty who plan to hire MSU employed research assistants must cover their hourly rate and fringe benefits in their budget. Travel expenses must strictly adhere to MSU policies and guidelines. Personal computers/printers are considered general office equipment and are not allowed. Extensions and carry-over of funds beyond June 30, 2026 are not permitted.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be submitted in pdf format via e-mail to the Advisory Committee Chairperson: Joan Ilardo at ilardo@msu.edu and Molly Polverento at smeltzer@msu.edu. Any tables, figures, or images used in the application must be readable and embedded in the proposal text (no appendices permitted). The deadline of receipt of applications is 11:59 PM on May 30, 2025. Failure to follow the guidelines for preparation of the grant proposal will result in rejection of the application.

REQUIRED APPLICATION MATERIALS

1. A current curriculum vitae that includes education, current professional responsibilities, current and completed research support, and publications;
2. A letter from the applicant describing personal and professional interest in aging research, reasons for seeking support through the Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment, relevant experience and training, collaborators and their involvement in the project, and commitment to a career in an aging discipline (Maximum 2 pages);
3. A proposal describing the research that the applicant plans to undertake, including a problem statement, theoretical perspective, detailed methods, analysis plan, data protection and storage, and significance to gerontology and geriatric research. The importance of the research to gerontology or geriatric medicine must be articulated. The proposal should begin with an abstract of no more than 250 words. The full proposal should be a maximum length of 10 pages, including the abstract and references [double-spaced, 12 point font size, one-inch margins/header/footer, with no appendices].
4. A detailed workplan with project activities, proposed timeline, intended outputs, outcomes, and expected impacts.
5. One letter of support from a colleague familiar with the applicant and their research area and can attest to the importance of the study. Co-Investigators cannot provide letters of support. The Advisory Committee reserves the right to contact the references for additional information;
6. A detailed budget and budget justification for the twelve months of the award, specifically describing how the funds will be allocated. When more than one investigator is listed in the application, the principal investigator will be the person with whom the Advisory Committee will communicate.

SELECTION PROCESS

Each complete application will be initially reviewed by two members of the Advisory Committee who disclose no conflicts of interest with the investigator(s). Applications will be presented by the primary reviewer during the Advisory Committee Meeting for additional review and discussion. Content experts may be called upon to assist Committee Members in the review process, as appropriate. Those applicants selected as awardees will be notified by June 20, 2025 with awards effective July 1, 2025.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Awardees will be required to sign an award acceptance/agreement letter prior to disbursement of any funds from the endowment. A one-page progress report must be submitted no later than December 31 to update the Advisory Committee on the status of completion of project goals. Awardees are encouraged to contact the Advisory Committee at any time during the grant cycle to seek advice, if needed. The Advisory Committee reserves the right to withdraw funding if the awardee is not demonstrating appropriate progress. A final summary report will be due by July 2, 2026, no extension will be granted due to the mechanism of the funding. The final report should include a brief description of the project; the key findings of the project to date; future plans related to the project, including publications and external grant submissions; and a brief description of how this funding helped advance your scholarship plans or career in aging. The summary should be approximately two pages long. Publications and presentations derived from the research project must cite funding from the **Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment in Gerontology**. Reports should be submitted to Joan Ilardo, PhD at ilardo@msu.edu.

CHECKLIST

- ☐ Curriculum Vitae
- ☐ Letter from applicant

- ☐ Research proposal (including abstract and references)
- ☐ IRB file number from responsible organization
- ☐ Letter of support for faculty applicants
- ☐ Budget and budget narrative
- ☐ Deadline for applications: 11:59 PM on May 30, 2025

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

IRB approval of the proposed project is required as a condition of funding. Awardees must be current on all MSU required IRB/Human Subjects/Animal training/certification requirements.

ENDOWMENT FUND ADMINISTRATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The endowment fund is managed by the Pearl J. Aldrich Advisory Committee, chaired by Joan Ilardo, PhD, Associate Professor in the Department of Family Medicine, MSU College of Human Medicine. The Advisory Committee is composed of faculty representatives from various MSU academic units (Human Medicine, Nursing, Social Work) who have an interest in gerontology, geriatric medicine, or research methods. Award disbursements are managed by Molly Polverento, Department of Family Medicine, MSU College of Human Medicine. All questions regarding the Pearl Aldrich Graduate Student and Faculty Research Awards may be directed to Joan Ilardo, PhD, Advisory Committee Chairperson, ilardo@msu.edu.