

The Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment in Gerontology Graduate Student Award

The Pearl Aldrich Graduate Student Award is funded by the Pearl J. Aldrich Endowment. These one-year awards are competitive and intended to support Michigan State University graduate students committed to or strongly considering a career in a discipline that relates to aging. Awards will be used to support projects with a clearly identifiable focus that relates to gerontology or geriatric medicine.

GRADUATE STUDENT APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- All Michigan State University graduate students enrolled full-time at MSU (e.g., Masters and Doctoral degree students/candidates), medical students enrolled at MSU, and residents/fellows in training programs affiliated with MSU.
- Each applicant must identify a faculty mentor.
- applicants who demonstrate commitment to a career in an aging discipline.

CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED IN SELECTION OF GRADUATE STUDENT 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 ability to successfully conduct the proposed project
- ☐ Evidence of the investigator's commitment to a career in a discipline that directly relates to aging
- ☐ Evidence of research mentorship and mentor commitment to the applicant's professional development as an aging scholar

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. The scope of the project should be appropriate for completion in one-year. No carry-over funding is available for this award.

RESEARCH PROJECT FUNDING

Grant awards up to \$3,000 may be requested. The funding cycle for all award recipients begins on July 1, 2025 and ends on June 30, 2026.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be submitted as a pdf to the Advisory Committee Chairperson: Joan Ilardo at ilardo@msu.edu and Molly Polverento at smeltzer@msu.edu. The deadline of receipt of applications is 11:59 PM on May 30, 2025.

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 project, including a problem statement, theoretical perspective, detailed methods, analysis plan, and potential significance to aging research. The importance of the research to the field of gerontology or geriatric medicine must be articulated. The proposal should begin with an abstract of no more

than 250 words, double-spaced. The full proposal should be a maximum length of 5 pages, including the abstract and references. [double-spaced, 12 point font size, one inch margins/header/footer, and no appendices]. In addition, provide a 12-month workplan that specifies the timing of the key activities and objectives.

4. A signed letter from a faculty mentor describing the mentor's association with the student, plan for supervision of the student's research activities and adherence to the study timetable, and student's prospects to become an aging scholar.

5. A detailed budget and budget justification for the twelve months of the award, specifically describing how the funds will be allocated.

SELECTION PROCESS

Each complete application will be initially reviewed by two members of the Advisory Committee who disclose no conflicts of interest. Applications will be presented by the primary reviewer during the Advisory Committee Meeting for review and discussion. Content experts may be called upon to assist Committee Members in the review process, as appropriate. 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 the project. A final summary report will be due by July 2, 2026. No extensions can 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 has helped you advance your scholarship plans or careers 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.

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 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.