

**2026 UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging  
Carmela and Salvatore Bitondo Graduate  
Fellowship in Elder Mistreatment  
Endowment Request for Research Proposals**

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## **Description of Program**

The Carmela and Salvatore Bitondo Graduate Fellowship in Elder Mistreatment Endowment will award a \$10,000 grant to support elder mistreatment focused research conducted by graduate students, fellows, or junior faculty at UTHealth Houston. This funding is intended to support pilot studies that strengthen faculty members' ability to secure larger extramural grants.

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## **Research Proposal Criteria**

### **1. Scope of Research**

Project proposals must focus on elder mistreatment (including self-neglect)-related issues from one or more of the UTHealth Houston disciplines. Proposals may include clinical or non-clinical research. Additionally, proposals may address specific concerns related to older adults and/or caregivers. Submissions should be no longer than three pages and must include a summary written for the general audience.

### **2. Interdisciplinary and Collaborative Approach**

In alignment with the guiding principles of the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging, proposed studies must be interdisciplinary and collaborative. When possible, the research should reflect the community within which the study is intended to impact.

### **3. Eligibility and Mentorship**

- Preference will be given to proposals led by investigators conducting practical evidence-informed, but previously unfunded research studies with sound rationale and evaluation plans.
- Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with a senior faculty mentor during the proposal submission process and throughout the study. Proposals demonstrating clear involvement of a senior faculty mentor will receive a more favorable evaluation.
- Proposals should also clearly indicate a plan to consult with the UTHealth Roybal Center for Elder Mistreatment Intervention Research (<https://www.uth.edu/elder-mistreatment/>) regarding study design and analysis before starting the study or community project.

### **4. Applicant Membership Requirement**

Applicants must be members of the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging at the time of submission. Visit <https://www.uth.edu/aging/about/membership> for more information.

## **5. Budget and Funding Restrictions**

A detailed budget must be included in the proposal. The following expenses are not allowable:

- Travel expenses
- Computer equipment
- Personal expenses
- Dinners or conference-related costs

**Note:** All awarded funds must be spent within the United States.

## **6. Application and Departmental Approval**

- The application does not require approval from the Office of Sponsored Projects and does not require Review and Approval (R&A) forms.
- A brief statement of approval and the signature of the graduate's advisor, fellow's director or junior faculty's department chair are required as part of the submission packet.

## **7. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval**

- IRB approval must be obtained before funds can be disbursed to the awardee.
- **Note:** IRB approval is not required at the time of proposal submission.

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# **Research Proposal Requirements and Reporting**

## **1. Study Completion**

Recipients must complete their research studies within one year of receiving funding or demonstrate reasonable progress toward study completion.

## **2. Progress and Final Reports**

- A quarterly status report must be submitted, detailing accomplishments, progress toward measurable goals, a breakdown of all expenditures, and the plan for the next quarter.
- A final one-year report must be submitted to the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging.
- Reporting forms will be provided by Institute on Aging staff.

## **3. Budget Modifications**

Any significant budget changes must be reported to the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging.

## **4. Protocol Changes**

Any significant changes to the study protocol must be reported to both the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging and the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

## 5. Dissemination of Results

Recipients are required to disseminate their research findings through at least one presentation and/or publication that must be submitted to the UTHealth Institute on Aging when complete.

## 6. UTHealth Institute on Aging Presentation

Awardees must participate in a presentation for UTHealth Institute on aging Elder Mistreatment Core members and other interested faculty at the conclusion of the research within the funding year.

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## Application Procedure

- **Application Deadline:** January 30, 2026
- **Submission:** Please fill out the survey at the link:  
<https://redcap.uth.tmc.edu/surveys/?s=WJET4R4DKNYWM3AD> You will be prompted to upload your application items in a single PDF

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## Notification of Awards

- Proposals will be reviewed by members of the UTHealth Institute on Aging Elder Mistreatment Core and other experts deemed relevant to assess the scientific quality of the submissions.
- The awardee will be notified in February.

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## General Guidelines for Submissions

All submissions should include the following documents:

### 1. Narrative (3 pages, 11 font)

- Background
- Problem Statement
- Research Question(s) and Hypothesis(es)
- Methods
- Significance of the Proposed Study to the Field of Elder Mistreatment
- Impact on the Elder Mistreatment Field or Geriatric Community
- How the Funding is Expected to Support Your Research Career

### 2. Budget

### 3. Statement of Approval (see Criteria 6)

For further inquiries, please contact **IOA Staff at [ioa@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:ioa@uth.tmc.edu)**