

**UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging  
Harry E. Bovay, Jr. Foundation  
Annual Symposium on Aging Research Pitch Competition  
Request for Proposals 2026**

**Description of Program**

The Harry E. Bovay, Jr. Foundation Endowment for Aging Research and Education is dedicated to advancing interdisciplinary research and education across the various schools within UTHealth Houston. Its objectives include enhancing collaboration among faculty members across different disciplines and fostering the development of translational research initiatives.

In alignment with these goals, the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging is pleased to announce a competitive funding opportunity for junior faculty members (at the Instructor and Assistant Professor levels) at UTHealth Houston or other institutions in the Texas Medical Campus. This competition will award \$15,000 for first place, \$12,500 for second place, and \$7,500 for third place. These grants are intended to support pilot studies in aging research and are aimed at faculty who have not previously received support through this program. The primary objective of these awards is to provide preliminary funding for aging related research, that will enable researchers to develop their projects and enhance their prospects for securing larger extramural grants.

**Criteria**

1. Project proposals must address aging-related conditions and issues related to understanding their underlying mechanisms and/or management. Clinical and basic science, research will be considered.
2. Preference will be given to proposals from principal investigators who are junior faculty with innovative research studies that are previously unfunded. Junior faculty applicants are encouraged to work with a senior faculty mentor in submitting the proposal and, if awarded, in carrying out the study.
3. Applicants should be members of the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging or propose a project including an Institute member as a collaborator. Applications will also be accepted from non-members without collaborating Institute members; if awarded a grant, the awardee is expected to become a member of the UTHealth Houston Institute on Aging. <https://www.uth.edu/aging/about/membership>
4. Non-allowable budget expenses are travel expenses, food/beverages and computer equipment. All funds must be spent within the United States.
5. The application does not require approval from the Office of Sponsored Projects and does not require Review and Approval (R&A) forms. The application does require a brief statement of approval and signature of the department chair.

## **Application procedure**

Applications must contain:

### **I. Proposal\***

Size limit: 2 pages, single spaced, including Figures and up to 10 references.

Font: Calibri, size 11. Margins: 0.5".

Proposal should include the following information:

- Title / PI / Institution
- Background / problem / significance
- Hypothesis / proposed solution to the problem
- Approach to address the problem / hypothesis
- Potential impact for translation / continuation
- Current resources available
- Description of expenses to be covered by the grant
- Description of the collaborator's roles.
- References

\*Preliminary data are encouraged but not required.

### **II. Applicant CV including educational background, publications, funding history.**

### **III. Statement of approval from the department chair, as stated in the criteria.**

**Application deadline is January 5, 2026.**

**Finalists will be announced January 16, 2026.**

Applications must be submitted as a single PDF file. To submit your application, fill out the REDCap survey at the link and upload your PDF where indicated. <https://redcap.link/IOA-SOAR>

## **Awards**

Proposals will be reviewed by leadership of the Institute on Aging. Based on the reviewer's recommendations, the top three finalists will present a 10-minute presentation of their pitch at the Annual Symposium on Aging Research on **February 9, 2026** at which the attendees will vote on the three pitch presentations. The finalists will be announced at the conclusion of the Symposium.

If the study involves human subjects or vertebrate animals, IRB or animal protocol approval is required prior to award.

## **Expectations of Awardees**

Awardees are expected to:

1. Register and attend the Symposium conference on February 9, 2026
2. Complete their research studies within 1 year of the award or demonstrate substantial progress towards completion of the study.
3. Provide a written report of progress made and accomplishments January 15, 2027.
4. Notify the Institute of Aging of any significant budget changes.
5. Notify the Institute of Aging and IRB of any significant protocol changes.
6. Disseminate their results through a minimum of one presentation and/or publication.
7. Participate in a presentation of findings at the 2027 symposium on Aging meeting.