The San Antonio Nathan Shock Center and the Barshop Institute are seeking small grant proposals in aging research from UTHSCSA, UTSA, and Texas Biomedical Research Institute faculty. Funds are available for research on basic biological gerontology through the Nathan Shock Center of Excellence in the Basic Biology of Aging, a component of the Barshop Institute. This announcement describes the Pilot Grant Program. The program is essentially the same as we implemented in 2015. The Research Development Core Mentoring Program is also described at the end of this Notice.

We expect to again fund up to $100,000 of these Pilot awards. This is due to the generous co-funding by our partner entities at UTHSCSA (the Institute for Integration of Medicine and Science, the Cancer Therapy and Research Center, the School of Medicine Dean’s Office, and the Office of the Vice-President for Research).

Two Pilot Grant Programs:

1) Basic Aging Pilot Grants.
   All tenure track faculty members are eligible to apply.
   Junior faculty beginning their research careers (faculty within four years of appointment at the level of Assistant Professor) will compete with other applications. but may receive priority for funding if their research program aligns with the aims of the Nathan Shock Center. If you qualify as junior faculty please so indicate on the face page – do not check the box for Transformative Award;

2) Transformative Award in Basic Aging Pilot Grants.
   All faculty (tenure track or non-tenure track) are eligible to apply for the (see below).
   This program builds on the success of the former Emerging Technology Program, now replaced with this award. There is no requirement that applicants for this award have any prior experience in aging research, and prior experience in aging research will not disqualify applicants.

Pilot grants will be awarded for up to $25,000, direct costs. Budgets must be fully justified. Whether the budget is realistic and justified will be a factor that will be considered by the Executive Committee in selecting grant applications for funding. Normally, only a single year of funding will be provided, but occasionally a second year of funding may be awarded for junior faculty. If a second year of funding is requested, the applicant will be required to submit a progress report (maximum of 2 pages) as part of the process for 2nd year funding.

For both pilot grant programs, it is very important to include a discussion of how the pilot grant will enhance future success in obtaining extramural funding.

If your project proposes the use of one of the Nathan Shock Aging Center Cores, please consult with the relevant core leader, and obtain a letter of support to be included with your application (does not count toward the page limit). See http://nathanshock.barshop.uthscsa.edu
**Specific areas of interest:**

All pilot project applicants should indicate if their proposal falls under one or both of these two categories:

- **Research with a specific translational impact:** Applications under this area are eligible for co-funding by the Institute for the Integration of Medicine and Science. While all applications must address some aspect of the basic biology of aging, this funding is for applications that have specific identifiable translational aspects that indicate a clear path by which the research can be brought into use in human medicine.

- **Research at the aging/cancer interface:** Applications under this area are eligible for co-funding by the Cancer Therapy and Research Center. While all applications must address some aspect of the basic biology of aging, this funding is for applications that aim to use better understanding of basic aging biology to address fundamental issues of why cancer is much more frequent in older individuals and how this research can have implications for cancer therapy and research. Note: It is not sufficient to state only that cancer generally, or an organ-specific cancer, is more frequent as a function of age as a justification for research in this area.

It **is not a requirement** that Basic Aging Pilot Grant applications address either of these two specific areas, but if your application is relevant for either or both of these areas please so indicate on the application.

The **Transformative Award in Basic Aging Research** is a program that will fund investigators with **conceptual ideas** in basic aging research that could **transform the field**. In many cases, the need is to test ideas in aging research that are truly innovative and transformative, but preliminary data must be obtained in order for the researcher to be able to submit a credible grant application. We will also fund projects that aim to critically test the usefulness of novel emerging technologies in basic aging research.

**Proposal format and guidelines for all grant applications:**

1. Face page – you can find the form to use at [http://nathanshock.barshop.uthscsa.edu/pilot-grant-program/](http://nathanshock.barshop.uthscsa.edu/pilot-grant-program/)

2. Use NIH formatting throughout. 1 page for Specific Aims, 5 pages for Research Strategy. This may include Significance, Innovation, and Approach, including statistical analyses to be used, and how the pilot grant will enhance future success in obtaining extramural funding.

3. References (with complete authorship and titles). No pagelimit.

4. NIH-formatted 1st Year Budget and budget justification (**RESTRICTIONS on BUDGET: No funds for PI’s salary or travel; no major items of equipment**).

5. NIH-formatted biosketch – current NIH format. Include for all faculty involved in the grant application.

6. Letters of support as needed.

7. Please provide the names and contact information for at least **3 External Reviewers**.

8. Assemble the grant application into a **single PDF** and email it to Dr. James Lechleiter, Co-Leader of the Research Development Core ([lechleiter@uthscsa.edu](mailto:lechleiter@uthscsa.edu)).
**Evaluation:**

Evaluation of the proposals is a two-stage process. At stage one, two experts on the subject of the proposal from outside the Health Science Center prepare written evaluations. At stage two, a panel of Shock Center Core Leaders uses these written reports to judge the merit of the proposal and evaluate the relevance of the research to gerontology and to the goals of the Barshop Institute and the Nathan Shock Aging Center. We hope to be able to notify awardees no later than May 15, 2018.

**Award Recipient Follow-up:**

Successful applicants will be required to provide the Barshop Institute with the following:

- A seminar on the pilot study research
- Notification of abstracts or papers published to which the pilot study contributed
- Notification of extramural grants sought and awards received that relate to the pilot study

**Proposals must be received no later than 5:00 PM, March 1, 2018.**