

## **Duke Pepper Center Research Career Development Award Request for Applications, 2023**

**Background:** The Duke Pepper Older Americans Independence Center (OAIC) (NIA P30 AG028716-01) aims to promote research career development in aging research through its Core resources. The central theme of our OIAC is to **understand and enhance reserve and resilience to promote recovery from stressors in late life**. The three Research Cores include:

- **Analysis Core**, which provides statistical and technical support for projects as well as furthering statistical and analytical science.
- **Molecular Measures Core**, which provides comprehensive biomarkers phenotyping to characterize biochemical, metabolic and genetic bases for aging research.
- **Health and Mobility Measures Core** which provides expertise, devices, equipment and protocols for functional, physical and psychological measures.

**Purpose of the Award:** The goal of the Pepper Research Education Component (REC) is to promote the development of future research leaders who are conducting basic, translational, or clinical research within the focus area of physical reserve and resilience. The REC will award up to 3 career development awards, of 2-year duration, with funding beginning July 1, 2024. The award can cover salary, project support, and research career development activities. REC scholars are supported by the Pepper Center Research Cores listed above, and meet regularly with a mentorship team including Pepper Center Investigators. At the conclusion of the award, REC scholars are expected to pursue external funding in their research area.

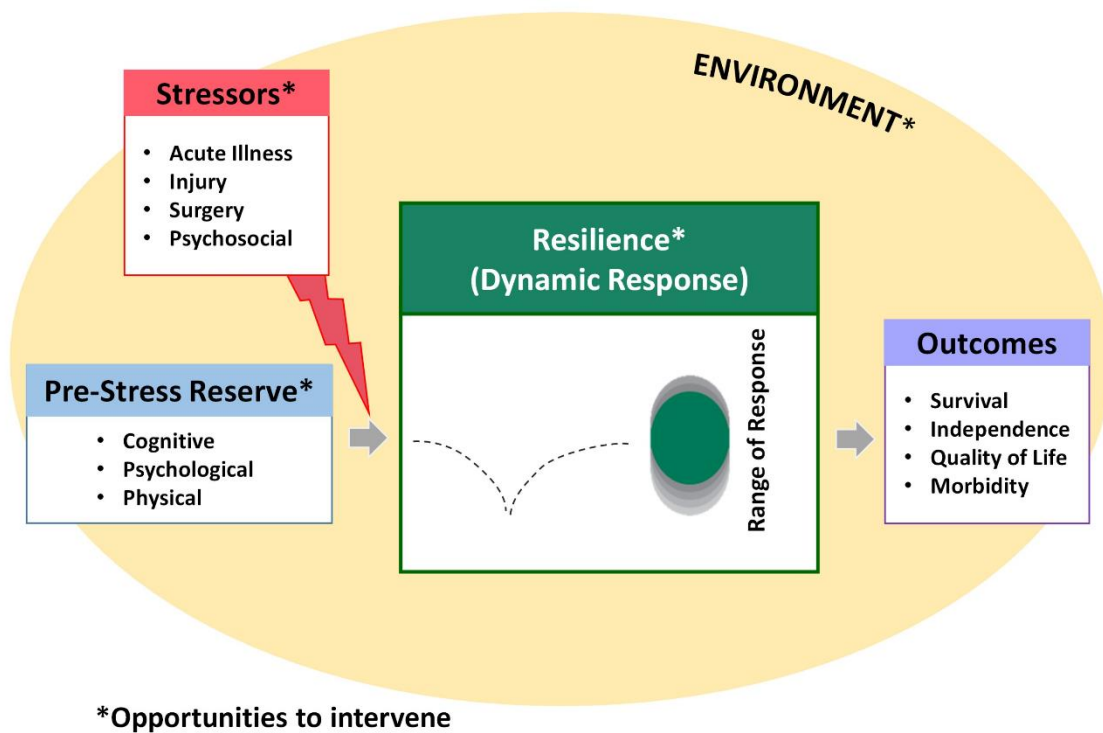
**Eligible Candidates/Scholars:** Candidates should be within 5 years of their first faculty appointment or an advanced fellow/postdoctoral student with clear plans for transition to faculty status by July, 2024. Only U.S. citizens or non-citizen nationals, or an individual lawfully admitted for permanent residence who possesses an Alien Registration Receipt Card (I-151 or I-551), or some other verification of legal admission as a permanent resident prior to appointment, are eligible due to NIH regulations. Individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible. Candidates must be able to commit a minimum of 6 calendar months of full-time professional effort for career development and research activities.

**Support:** Funds should be budgeted to support professional effort, project expenses, and professional development activities. Applicants do not need to budget for a full 6 calendar months of effort on their REC award, but must be able to show that they have other sources of funding to (e.g., GEMSSTAR, fellowships, foundation awards) that will protect at least 50% of their time for research.

- The Pepper REC Award will provide \$45,000 per year in direct funding
- Applicants in the Department of Medicine will receive additional \$20,000 matching funds. Applicants in other Departments should also request matching funds from their Chairs.
- The total budget will therefore be either \$45,000 or \$65,000, depending on whether matching funds are provided by the applicant's Department

The Pepper Center will also provide tailored career development activities, structured mentorship in aging research, technical/project support from the Center's Cores, and collaborative opportunities.

**Eligible Research:** The candidate's research focus can be basic, translational, epidemiological, or clinical so long as it supports the Pepper Center theme. Research that bridges basic science and clinical areas or has the potential to lead to intervention is of particular interest, and research related to health equity is also encouraged. Research should utilize one or more of the Pepper Center cores, see descriptions here <https://sites.duke.edu/centerforaging/claude-d-pepper-older-americans-independence-center/cores/>



### **Commitment to Diversity and Equity**

The Duke Pepper Center is committed to promoting health equity and adding value to our community through diverse perspectives. Scientists from traditionally under-represented backgrounds are especially encouraged to apply. Additionally, all applications should discuss how the proposed work may reduce health disparities. If human studies are proposed, the application should provide its strategy to promote inclusion and representation in the study population.

**Application Process and Timeline:** Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to meet with one or of the core leaders (listed below) to ensure eligibility and fit with the Pepper Center Goals.

- Letter of Interest (LOI) and Principal Investigator NIH Biosketch due **September 11, 2023**
- Applicants will be notified by September 22, 2023 if they are invited to submit a full application
- Full application will be due **November 10, 2023**
- You will be notified of funding decisions by **Jan 19, 2024**

**Full Application format and suggested length:**

1. Specific aims (1 page)
2. Background and Significance, Prior Studies, Approach (3-4 pages)
3. Candidate background, career objectives, professional development plan (1-2 pages)  
**Maximum length 5 pages for items 1-3**
4. Budget with brief justification (1 page)
5. References cited
6. Mentor letter. This should summarize the research accomplishments to date, describe a plan for ongoing mentorship in the research content area, and confirm that the candidate will have an eligible faculty position and 50% protected research effort by July, 2024
7. Updated Biosketch

**Please upload Duke Pepper Center Research Career Development Award proposal LOIs to:**

<https://strongbox.oit.duke.edu/strongbox/uploader/Pepper%20REC%20LOIs%202023/217661544020>

For administrative questions, please contact:

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For programmatic and scientific questions, please contact:

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