

Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging Collaborative Research Partners Program for 2019 Funded Research

Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging (the Institute), Evanston, Illinois, is conducting a two-phase application process for collaborative research studies that have implications for older adults and/or the aging services workforce. A maximum amount of \$100,000 is available to fund each selected research project. Up to two projects will be selected for funding, and should commence by January 1, 2019, and be completed by December 31, 2019. Letters of Inquiry are due by 5:00 p.m. Central time on Friday, April 6, 2018.

Established in 1999, Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging is the translational research arm of Mather LifeWays, a 75+-year-old, non-denominational not-for-profit organization whose mission is to create Ways to Age Well.SM The Institute conducts applied research in the field of aging for both industry and scholarly audiences. Our research team is multidisciplinary in training, with expertise in various content areas relating to wellness among older adults and the aging services workforce.

Collaboration

Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging is seeking to leverage existing expertise and expand capacity by undertaking collaborative projects.

Collaborative aspects may include:

- scoping and defining research questions
- joint selection of study measures
- shared responsibility for data collection
- collaboration on data analysis
- co-development of manuscripts
- co-presenting at conferences

Examples of previous and upcoming collaborations:

- A multisite program evaluation was conducted utilizing a program developed by the Institute. The funded university managed data collection at sites in its area, while the Institute collected data from Chicago-area sites. The Institute and the university jointly developed the project design and conducted the analysis.
- The Institute contributed to a study proposed by university researchers by reviewing study measures relevant to older adults and collaborating on analysis of data.
- A mixed methods study was conducted in which the funded university led the survey portion of the study with Institute review and input, and the Institute led the qualitative portion of the study with review and input from the university.

Each of these projects has led or will lead to joint presentations at academic and/or industry conferences, and co-development of manuscripts to be submitted in a peer-reviewed journal. Recruiting Mather LifeWays customers and/or residents may be possible, though is not required, and is not considered in itself to be substantial collaboration.

This RFP is a request for a preliminary Letter of Inquiry. We ask that you offer ideas on how you envision working as a research partner with the Institute. If you are selected to submit a full proposal, we will provide feedback and/or discuss the collaborative aspect of the project with you to ensure that the plan for collaboration is feasible and mutually beneficial.

Priority Topic Areas

Proposal topics of interest include:

- positive aging and resilience
- motivators of healthy behaviors that impact lifestyle choices
- employee engagement and retention of the senior living workforce
- technology supporting wellness in older adults
- maintaining/promoting wellness among independent older adults

Although we recognize the importance of research into issues related to dementia, assisted living, and skilled care, our current focus is on maintaining health and wellness among independent older adults. Replication of existing programs and interventions are not of interest in this request for proposals.

Schedule

The schedule for the Letter of Inquiry, invitation for submitting the Full Proposal, and award of funding is shown in the table below.

SCHEDULE OF 2018 COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM		
Phase I Letter of Inquiry	April 6, 2018 by 5:00 p.m. CT	Letters of Inquiry due
Phase II Full Proposal	May 21, 2018	Invitation for full proposals issued
	July 30, 2018	Full proposals due
Funding Award	Sept 21, 2018	Announce awards
Project Begins	by January 1, 2019	Project begins

Award Administration and Reporting

The award recipient will be required to submit invoices for actual expenses incurred during the one-year project period. Invoices will be paid quarterly upon receipt and approval of quarterly progress reports. Within three months of the conclusion of the study, the principal investigator and partnering researcher from the Institute will submit a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal. Final quarterly invoice will be paid upon receipt and approval of a final written report.

Eligibility for Funded Research

The principal investigator must have a doctoral degree (or equivalent) and be affiliated with an accredited college or university in the United States (or be affiliated with another major research institution or organization). Although non-academic institutes and organizations are eligible to apply, we have generally funded projects submitted by university-based applicants. Each principal investigator may submit only one proposal. We welcome principal investigators from more than one department in a single organization to submit individual proposals.

Letter of Inquiry Instructions

LOIs are a mandatory prerequisite for submission of a full application. We will invite a subset of applicants to submit a full application.

The LOI is limited to two pages, and should include information requested on the attached template.

- Figures and general tables are allowed and will be included in the page count.
- References are not included within the two-page limit.
- Do not include supplemental materials (e.g., supporting journal articles and Letters of Support) or additional information not requested on the template.

Formatting Guidelines:

- **Header:** Include the Principal Investigator's (PI) full name on each page in the top-left corner.
- **Font:** Use Calibri size 11. Figures, tables, and captions may have size 8 font.
- **Spacing:** Use single spacing.
- **Margins:** Use one-inch margins. The header may fall within the top margin.
- **Page limit:** Two pages, excluding references
- **References:** References may be attached and are not included in the page count.

Focus on including critical information because space is limited. The main purpose of the LOI is to ensure invited proposals are a good fit with the mission and goals of the Institute on Aging.

Although a general description of methods is requested, a complete and detailed description of methods is not expected in the LOI. If invited to submit a full application, a detailed budget and budget justification will also be requested at that time.

Evaluation:

Letters will be evaluated based on responses to all items listed in the LOI Template, including whether the proposed topic addresses one of the priority areas identified in the funding announcement; importance of the specific research question; degree to which the study is expected to be relevant and actionable; study design; and prior relevant research experience. The LOI must also comply with requirements in this funding announcement and adherence to the administrative and formatting requirements listed in the LOI Guidelines, specifically the two-page limit (excluding references) for the LOI. All applicants who submit an LOI will be notified as to whether they will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Additional Requirements:

1. Funds will be awarded for no more than one calendar year.
2. Funding requests are up to \$100,000 per project.

Research Program Application Process Overview

The Institute's competitive application process is divided into two phases:

Phase I, Request for Letters of Inquiry: In Phase I, applicants submit Letters of Inquiry for projects that address an important issue in senior living or the field of aging services. Applicants must follow the guidelines provided to submit the ideas for their proposed project. [Download the guidelines for the Letter of Inquiry.](#)

Phase II, Request for Full Proposals: Selected applicants will be invited to participate in Phase II, Request for Full Proposals, and will be asked to submit a more detailed project proposal. Specific requirements and instructions will be included in the “Request for Full Proposals” notification. The Institute will advise all applicants who provide a Letter of Inquiry whether or not they are invited to submit a Full Proposal. You should not prepare a Full Proposal unless invited in writing.

Deadline for Letter of Inquiry Submission: Completed Letters of Inquiry must be submitted via email to Ajla Basic, proposals@matherlifeways.com and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. CT on April 6, 2018. A confirmation of receipt will be provided within one business day. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Questions and Assistance

Should you have any questions about the process or requirements, please contact Ajla Basic at (847) 492.5036 or proposals@matherlifeways.com.

To learn more about Mather LifeWays and the Institute, visit our websites: matherlifeways.com and matherlifewaysinstituteonaging.com