

Request for Proposals (RFP)

LAUNCH: Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Innovation Challenge

A Signature Incubator-Style Competition Hosted by the Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Philanthropy Board of Advisors, powered by the Center for Healthcare Innovation.

Overview

The Sticht Center for Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Innovation Challenge is the flagship annual initiative of the Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Philanthropy Board of Advisors. This incubator-style competition seeks bold, early-stage ideas that advance research, education, or clinical care for older adults. Eligible projects must involve at least one **clinician, researcher, or trainee** within the Section on Gerontology and Geriatric Medicine at Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist and Wake Forest University School of Medicine. Proposals focused on palliative care are also welcome.

Members of the health system, school of medicine, or training program may submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). Proposals may be initiated by or include professionals from all fields, including nursing, therapy, pharmacy, advanced practice providers, administrators, and both research and non-research faculty or staff.

Funding Structure

A single project will receive an award of **\$80,000**, provided with support from the following sources:

- \$30,000 from the Sticht Fund for Geriatric Medicine Innovation
- \$50,000 in matching current-use gifts from Board members via the Aging & Alzheimer's Innovation Fund

The Wake Forest University School of Medicine Sticht Center for Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention in collaboration with the Advocate Health System promotes promising innovative ideas that have potential for immediate impact on the health care and wellness of older adults.

- **Overall Objective:** To promote the rapid translation of innovative concepts from either research or clinical care into the larger health system spanning wellness and prevention to diagnosis, treatment or coordinated care for seniors.
- **Key goal:** Facilitating the development and testing novel interventions or care models. The program funds full pilot innovation projects that have a high probability for scaling to this and other health systems and communities.

Innovative, multidisciplinary methods using EHR phenotyping are encouraged, along with the participation of junior faculty, gerontology specialists, Sticht Center members, and faculty from other disciplines interested in aging research. To identify clinicians, researchers, or trainees for your proposal, use the two links below. If your preferred team member is not listed, email Laura Hayworth (laura.hayworth@advocatehealth.org) for verification.

- [Sticht Center Leadership and Members – Wake Forest School of Medicine | Wake Forest University School of Medicine](#)
- [Alzheimer's Disease Research Center - Members | Wake Forest University School of Medicine](#)

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Examples include investigations such as:

- Health system or community-based interventions or care models that are based on age-related changes to specific,
 - Physical or cognitive function, or
 - Organ systems (e.g. cardiovascular, kidney, liver, immune system)
- Physical / cognitive function and/or their interrelationships in improving patient-centered outcomes.
- Advancing the use of emerging biomarkers (biofluids, tissues, cells) in clinical care or prevention.
- Use of cellular senescence science in the clinical setting.

While preliminary data is not mandatory for competitiveness, proposals should provide sufficient detail to enable reviewers to assess both the potential for successful outcomes and scalability.

Eligibility Information

Basic science and clinical research projects from Wake Forest University, Wake Forest School of Medicine and associated campuses, and all Advocate Health faculty/staff. Proposals are encouraged to include a market collaboration within any Wake Forest University School of Medicine and Advocate Health entity.

Award Information

The LAUNCH Healthy Aging & Alzheimer's Prevention Innovation Award is funded gifts from the J Paul Sticht Family Endowment and gifts from the Aging and Alzheimer's Philanthropic Advisory Board. The award allows up to \$80,000 for one year (July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027).

Application Process Timeline

What	When	Where
RFA Announcement	October 28, 2025	
LOI Deadline	December 1, 2025 (5:00pm EST)	
Application Invitation	December 15, 2025	
Application Deadline	January 12, 2026 (5:00pm EST)	
Finalists' Announcement	January 30, 2026	
Kickoff Workshop**	Early February, 2026	Virtual- TEAMS
Project Virtual Pitch Reviews	May 1 - 15, 2026	Virtual- TEAMS
LAUNCH Event**	Weekday, first week of June 2026 (TBD)	Winston-Salem, NC
Winner Award Announcement	Weekday, first week of June 2026 (TBD)	Winston-Salem, NC
Project Award Period	July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027	

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Application Process

Letter of Intent (LOI): Investigators must submit a 2-page LOI by **5:00 pm, Monday, December 1, 2025**. This mandatory requirement is pivotal to the process.

LOIs Requirements

- Descriptive title of proposed innovation project.
- Submitting Investigator: Name, institution, e-mail address.
- Co-Investigators: Name, institution, and academic rank.
 - A multi-disciplinary team including at least one team member from Wake Forest and / or Atrium Health.
- Hypothesis, rationale, significance, aims, and relevance to the WF OAIC objectives and goals.
- Description of study/plans
 - A commitment to use EHR data component of the proposed collaborative grant application.
 - Outline of how the proposed project moves prevention and care for older adults forward by addressing health care and wellness needs within the population.
 - Clear evidence that this proposal, where possible, benefits older adults from all backgrounds and cultures.
- Brief description of proposed \$80,000 allocation of funds.

All LOIs are reviewed by an internal committee. LOIs identified as having strong potential to generate innovative initiatives for older adults, along with those likely to attract health system or grant funding, will be invited to proceed with submitting a formal application.

Complete Application on basis of LOI: The top LOIs will be to move to the next stage, submitting a full application. If selected, Application Submission Instructions & Guidelines will be emailed to the investigators with the application REDCap link.

Applications must be submitted by **5:00PM on Monday, January 12, 2026**.

Submission Procedure

Inquiries are strongly encouraged so that we can provide specific guidance in developing relevant and successful proposals. For additional information or clarification please contact: Laura Hayworth (laura.hayworth@advocatehealth.org) and Renee Woodard (renee.woodard@advocatehealth.org).

Selection Process and Summary

- LOIs and Project applications will be reviewed by an internal selection committee.
- Top four project submissions will receive pitch coaching, including two sessions focused on long-term sustainability.
- Pitch coaching and guidance will be from Geriatrics, Gerontology, Center for Healthcare Innovation, and the Wake Forest School of Business.
- Finalists will present during a live pitch competition with judging panel on a Weekday, first week of June 2026 (TBD), 2026.

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- The judging panel will engage in Q&A and recommend a winner based on merit, feasibility, and strategic alignment.
- The judging panel will be composed of selected philanthropic advisory board members, Geriatrics, Gerontology, and Advocate Executive Leaders. All judges will be free of any conflicts of interest related to the selected proposals.
- The selected project will be officially announced at the conclusion of the pitch competition event and is scheduled for launch within the same calendar year.
- Awardee will provide a progress update at a future Aging and Advisory Philanthropic Board Meeting in late 2026 (TBA).

SEND IN YOUR LETTER OF INTENT TODAY!

<https://redcap.link/HealthyAgingandAlzheimersPreventionLAUNCH>



Atrium Health
Wake Forest Baptist



Wake Forest University
School of Medicine

