



# Pilot and Exploratory Studies Core (PESC)

Wake Forest Pepper Center Open House - January 21, 2021

Core Leaders:

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Leadership Intern:

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Staff:

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# PESC Goals and Aims

## **Goal :**

Support studies needed for the design of definitive, externally funded, translational research projects that promote the WF OAIC mission

## **Specific Aims:**

- Identify & promote promising key areas of research
- Identify & recruit talented investigators from complementary fields  
in conjunction with Research Education Component (REC)
- Solicit & facilitate competitive research proposals
- Conduct peer review to select best science and career development opportunities
- Coach & mentor investigative teams to maximize the quality of research
- Team with other WF OAIC cores to support pilot projects and mentor early career investigators to advance their development as successful translational scientists
- Evaluate and optimize OAIC PESC processes and procedures

# Request for Applications: Early Fall 2021

**Innovative, multidisciplinary, and translational approaches are encouraged**

Examples include assessing potential roles of:

- Body composition, musculoskeletal phenotypes

- Peripheral and/or central nervous system

- Bioenergetics / mitochondrial function

- Age-related changes to specific organ systems

- Cellular, biofluid, tissue, & genomic biomarkers (Geroscience)

- Physical and/or cognitive function in patient-centered outcomes

Full pilots, Ancillary studies, Analyses of databases/biorepositories (IASDR)

## **Eligibility Information**

- Basic science and clinical research projects

- Faculty from Reynolda or Medical Center campuses

- Letter of Intent Required: Early queries / consultation recommended



# Types of PESc Supported Projects

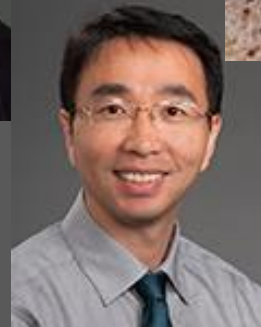
- **Pilot Studies** up to \$25,000 / year for up to 2 years.
- **Developmental projects** may arise from proposed pilots which may be resource / program building
- **Ignition Pilots** ~\$5,000 to obtain critical data for moving projects or proposals forward to funding
- **Exploratory Studies** to generate early proof of principle data or utilize existing databases
  - Awarded via ad-hoc review based on merit & resource availability, may be proposed at any time, sometimes a pre-pilot for a full pilot

# Pilot Study Review Criteria

(2 Internal, 1 External, 1 Statistical Reviewer)

- 1) Relevance to the WF OAIC theme
- 2) Scientific merit - innovation, originality, potential to advance knowledge
- 3) Appropriate study design, measures, and sample size to address proposed aims
- 4) Involvement of early career investigators committed to aging research, and senior investigators from other fields
- 5) Potential to lead to extramurally funded projects / high-impact publications
- 6) Use of multiple OAIC Cores
- 7) For clinical studies: Inclusion of women and minorities

# 2012 – 2020 PESC Investigators





# Examples: Pepper Pilot Core Success Stories (2021 Update)

- **Anthony Molina (2012 pilot) (REC Scholar)**
  - 10 Publications, Multiple collaborations (new RO1s)
  - 6+ Externally funded grant awards:
    - AHA Grant, R21, 2 R01s, U01 , R56, supplements
  - Bioenergetics Lab designated an Institutional Core Resource
- **Clark Files (2012 pilot) (REC Scholar)**
  - 4 publications
  - K08 funded, MPI R01 funded
- **Christina Hugenschmidt (2012 pilot) (REC Scholar)**
  - 2 publications, K01 awarded, R01 funded
- **Osvaldo Delbono (2013 pilot)**
  - 9 Publications, 2 R01s
  - Early Stage Investigators: Doctoral Research of Alexander Birbrair, PhD; AFAR Scholarship & 2015 Outstanding Doctoral Student Award; Doctoral Research of Anna Zaia Rodrigues, PhD; graduated 2020. Supplement to R01AG057013 NIH Minority Supplement: Henry Bonilla

# PESC Plans 2021

**RFA > EARLY FALL 2021**

**CONTACT US WITH IDEAS AND QUESTIONS!!!**

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