



**Arnold School of  
Public Health**

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

# Graduate Student Scholarship in Aging Application Guidelines

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## OFFICE FOR THE STUDY OF AGING

### **DIRECTORS**

**Megan Byers, LMSW,** [Megan.Byers@sc.edu](mailto:Megan.Byers@sc.edu)

**Maggi Miller, Ph.D.,** [chandlmj@email.sc.edu](mailto:chandlmj@email.sc.edu)

### **OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION**

Phone: 803-766-1794

Email: [OSA@sc.edu](mailto:OSA@sc.edu)

Website: [osa-sc.org](http://osa-sc.org)

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## Overview

The Graduate Student Scholarship in Aging is designed to recognize USC graduate students who exemplify the highest standards of scholarship to conduct research within the field of aging. Up to two awards in the amount of \$1,000 each may be made annually. This award may be used towards professional development activities and expenses, resources and supplies for data collection and analysis, travel, conference registration, professional workshops, or for other continuing education or training opportunities of importance to aging research.

This scholarship is available through the generous support of Norman and Gerry Sue Arnold (Arnold School of Public Health). The Graduate Scholarship in Aging was inaugurated in 2017 and continues to support graduate students with a focus on aging research.

## Eligibility

- Students currently enrolled in a graduate program at USC
- In good academic standing as determined by the Graduate School or program department
- Engaged in research focused on aging

## Funds Available and Project Dates

Applicants are applying for a one-time \$1,000 with a project period of up to/maximum of 12 months. The applicant must provide a detailed justification for the requested funds. Award expenses must be pre-approved by the chair or graduate director of the applicant's program of study department. The project date starts at the time the funding is received or no later than 30 days after the award announcement, *whichever is first*. The project end date is 12 months from receiving funding. Note: The proposed project may exceed the 12-month period; however, the award funding must be spent on the proposed project within the specified project period.

## Research Integrity and Authorship

All participants are bound by the Responsible Conduct of Research code of ethics, the Carolinian Creed, and the University's Honor Code. Violations of these codes will result in an immediate decline or withdrawal of funding and referral to the appropriate office for disciplinary measures. The graduate student is the primary author of the proposal and is responsible for writing their own proposal. Violations related to plagiarism include, but are not limited to, copying text from previous or same round proposals without proper citations, failure to include references or to cite said references, and any other forms of misconduct or misrepresentation.

## **Formatting Guidelines**

All applications must adhere to the formatting guidelines. Failure to do so will result in automatic rejection of the application without review.

- Title page
- Font must be Aptos or Times New Roman in size 12-point
- Margins of 1.0 inch
- Line spacing of 1.5 inches
- APA citations (in-text and references)
- The proposed project narrative is not to exceed 3 pages. Narratives exceeding this page limit will not be reviewed
- Budget narrative and itemized allow for an additional 2 pages
- References allow for an additional 2 pages

## **Application Requirements**

### **Title Page**

All applicants must include a title page providing the following information:

- Legal Name, as identified in USC systems
- Preferred name
- Program of study
- Department
- School/College
- Proposed project title
- Anticipated graduation date
- USC email address
- Name of student's academic advisor
- Name of primary resource advisor

### **Endorsement Letter**

All applicants must have a signed endorsement letter from their primary research advisor for the application to be complete. The endorsement letter must be written by a current USC faculty/staff member. Letters written by a former USC faculty who are no longer employed by the university will not be accepted.

This endorsement letter must be no longer than one page and submitted on department letterhead. Letters that are very general and/or vague are not helpful to the review committee. Each letter should include the following:

- How long the faculty member has known the applicant
- Evaluate the student's degree of independence, both generally and specifically, in the preparation of this proposal
- Assess students' intellectual ability, creativity, and critical thinking skills
- Assess the feasibility of project completion based on the student's degree of preparation and motivation

- Discuss the significance of this funding for the student's dissertation or thesis, i.e. how will this project impact the student's progress towards degree completion
- Any other information that the committee should be aware of
- Please give one of the following overall ratings of the student for the scholarship:
  - Very Strongly Recommend
  - Recommend with Confidence
  - Recommend with Reservations
  - Do Not Recommend

### **Aging Research Experience**

All applicants must include examples of work on the topic of aging. This may include a publication, a conference abstract, or an academic paper.

### **Proposed Project Narrative**

Think of the proposed project narrative as explaining to a non-expert (1) how you plan to answer or solve your research question and (2) how you or others will know that you have successfully answered your question. The proposal narrative must include the following sections with subheadings and is not to exceed 3 pages. All submissions must adhere to the [Formatting Guidelines](#).

### **Background and Significance**

- Clearly state your project topic and research questions or hypothesis.
- Briefly discuss the proposed idea and its context relative to the current state of knowledge in the field.
- This section should explain to the reviewers why the proposed project is important, novel, and exciting, and how it impacts aging research.

### **Project Description, Design, and Approach**

- Provide a detailed description of the project objectives, the proposed methods, and the specific anticipated outcomes. The methods and activities proposed should link directly back to the research question/project topic.
- Clearly describe the project evaluation or assessment plan. Describe how the project will be evaluated, analyzed, or reviewed, and/or how you will determine the project is complete/successful, the objectives met, and/or questions answered.
- Include a timeline for project tasks and expected accomplishments, presented as a table or other clear graphic format.

### **Significance of Funding**

- Explain how this proposed project will advance your graduate education and objectives, bridge your funding resources, and/or expand your research, scholarly, or creative direction, and how this project will directly contribute to your dissertation or thesis.

## Budget Justification

The applicant is required to submit (1) a budget narrative and (2) an itemized budget with the application. The budget narrative explains how the award will support the applicant's proposed project plan, justifies the line items, and is appropriate for the proposed project. The itemized budget clearly provides a cost breakdown. The budget section allows for an additional 2 pages from the proposed project narrative.

### Itemized Budget Example

| ITEM                        | QUANTITY     | UNIT COST | TOTAL COST   |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| Conference Registration Fee | 1            | 265       | 265          |
| Airplane Ticket             | 1 Round Trip | 435       | 435          |
| Hotel Accommodations        | 2 Nights     | 150       | 300          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                |              |           | <b>1,000</b> |

### Narrative Budget Example

The above proposed budget is based on estimates for the 2022 American Public Health Association Annual meeting rates. Findings from the study would be presented at either the Gerontological Association of America Annual Meeting or the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting. It will be an opportunity to share our findings with the scientific world, as well as generate a conversation for further studies in aging based on our findings. It will also be an opportunity to meet other researchers, learn from their experience, network, and improve my research skills to be better able to contribute to the field of aging research. The award will therefore help fund my attendance to a scientific conference to share our findings.

## Application Submission

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 PM EST on the deadline through Qualtrics, as provided on the [OSA website](#). Proposals received after this time will be declined without review. Incomplete proposals and those that do not adhere to formatting requirements or other guidelines will also be declined without review. Applicants are to fill in the requested information and submit all application requirements in **ONE PDF DOCUMENT** via Qualtrics. If multiple documents are attached or the information is incomplete, the application will be automatically denied without review.

## Additional Information

Applicants with any questions or concerns regarding the content or application process is to contact the Office for the Study of Aging (OSA) at [OSA@sc.edu](mailto:OSA@sc.edu) or 803-766-1794. A response is not guaranteed within 1 day of the application deadline. Therefore, it is best to review application requirements and to contact the OSA early.

**Post-Award Expectations**

The person awarded the Graduate Scholarship in Aging is expected to provide a presentation at the spring semester OSA meeting. The presentation will provide an overview of the awardee's proposal and any progress made with the research project since it was awarded.