

MILD COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM (MCIEP)

Call for Seed Grant Pre-Proposals

The number of individuals affected by **Mild Cognitive Impairment (MCI)** is increasing every year, with an estimated 15 to 20% of those over the age of 65 at risk of developing it. These individuals have increased problems with memory, problem-solving or spatial ability. The vision of the **Mild Cognitive Impairment Empowerment Program (MCIEP)** is to revolutionize the experience of people affected by MCI by creating a comprehensive approach that can be replicated nationally and internationally. With funding from the Cox Foundation and in partnership with Emory Brain Health and the Goizueta Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, faculty from Georgia Tech and Emory have developed a ground-breaking new program that combines therapeutics, technology, data science and the built environment to improve the lives of people diagnosed with MCI. The MCIEP mission is to empower people with MCI and their care partners and families by creating a living lab that promotes joy, purpose, health and wellness through comprehensive lifestyle programs, technologies and physical environments

With the aim of speeding up development, testing and dissemination of evidence-based interventions for MCI, the Innovation Accelerator (IA) core is offering seed grants to support research in the following areas: therapeutic programming, technology, and the built environment. The funded projects should result in innovative solutions, strategies or methodologies developed through a culture of collaboration among students, researchers, clinicians, and people with MCI in less than 12 months' time. **Beginning in the fall of 2019, \$150,000 in seed grants will be available each year for the next three years.**

Staff in the Innovation Accelerator Core will help successful applicants connect with people with MCI, care partners and staff and to access shared innovation space in the empowerment center in Executive Park.

The MCI EP Seed Grants are intended to support the **creation, implementation, and testing** of best practices to achieve one or more of the following goals:

- **Engage** people with MCI and their care partners in developing strategies and/or solutions for improving their lives;
- **Create** proof of concepts for new technological innovations, environmental designs, and non-pharmacological interventions or programs that can be used by people with MCI around the world; and,
- **Generate data** that will support external funding proposals in MCI consistent with MCIEP's mission and vision.

Pre-proposals are sought in the following 3 categories addressing any of the target domains of cognitive stimulation, functional independence, social engagement, physical activity, well-being, and education:

- **Built environment:** Evidence-based design strategies for interior and exterior built environments and products to support the independent, safe, joyful, engaged life of people with MCI and their families;
- **Technology:** Improve the lives of people with MCI and their care partners through the creation of non-intrusive and engaging interventions that guide and reinforce personalized therapy, support daily activities in the home, encourage physical activity, and foster social engagement; and,
- **Therapeutic Programs:** Develop meaningful programs for individuals affected by MCI that are grounded in science and based on the unique needs of participants in the domains of cognition, physical activity, social engagement, functional independence, wellbeing and education.

Proposals can range from semester to year-long research projects and smaller proposals can target funds to convene valuable discussions, gather data, develop methods and metrics or to prototype new designs and technologies.

TIMELINE

Pre-proposal due: August 29, 2019 by 5pm
Invitation for full proposals: September 10, 2019
Full Proposals due: September 30, 2019
Intent to fund announced: November 1, 2019
Funding received: Based on IRB approval (if required). Target January 1, 2020
Project completed: December 31, 2020

ELIGIBILITY

All applications should involve two or more investigators, with at least one faculty member from Georgia Tech and/or one from Emory. Additional collaborators from other organizations are encouraged, including but not limited to other academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, service providers, and industry.

BUDGETS

The maximum award available is \$50,000 for any individual project; smaller scaled projects are encouraged to maximize the number of grants that can be awarded. The pre-proposal document needs to include an estimated total budget with a list of the type of expenditures, but no detailed budget justification is required at this stage. Overhead is not allowed on the seed grants.

REVIEW CRITERIA

Submissions will be reviewed based on the involvement of stakeholders, composition of the research team and potential for impacting the lives of people with MCI. In particular, the review committee will look at how teams anticipate working directly with individuals with MCI and parts of their care network (therapists, family members); the Innovation Accelerator team will facilitate access to these important stakeholders for requirements gathering, design and evaluation activities. Specifically the peer review panel will evaluate proposals according to the following criteria, adapted from the NIH:

1. *Significance.* Does the project address an important problem or a critical barrier for people with MCI? Have people affected by MCI been involved in identifying this as an important issue? How will people with MCI be involved in the project? If the aims of the project are achieved, how will the lives of people with MCI be improved?
2. *Investigator(s).* Are the Principal Investigator (PI), collaborators and other researchers well suited to the project? Does the project team include people from both Emory and Georgia Tech? Is this a transdisciplinary collaboration? Does it create new collaborative relationships?
3. *Innovation.* Does the application challenge and seek to shift current understandings and approaches to empowering people with MCI? Are the concepts, approaches or methodologies, technologies, strategies or interventions novel to MCI?
4. *Approach.* Are the overall strategy, methodology and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the project? If the project involves human subjects research, are the plans for protection of human subjects from research risks justified in terms of the scientific goals and research strategy proposed?

All pre-proposals will be evaluated by a review committee comprised of representatives from all cores of the MCIEP and individuals affected by MCI. Feedback from the committee will be given to all pre-proposals. Those selected for full proposals will be contacted by the end of the day on September 10.

Note: For additional information or questions regarding the seed grant process email Kimberly.seaton@design.gatech.edu

PRE PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

Proposed Project	
Proposal Name	
Proposal Number	<i>To be assigned upon submission</i>
Date Submitted	
Investigator(s) Name, Organization (Please attach CV or resume of PIs)	
E-Mails	
Phone/Extension	
Additional Collaborator(s) Name, Organization	
E-Mail	

Please complete the form below describing your proposal

1. Summary and Area of Interest

- i. Executive summary.

Provide a brief description (no more than a page) of the proposed research project, including the key questions or goals, process and deliverables.

- ii. Primary area of interest. Technology Built Environment Therapeutics

What is your area of interest? Please describe how your proposal falls within the scope of technology, built environment, or therapeutics.

2. Proposed Outcomes

- i. What are the expected outcomes of the proposal, and what benefit will it bring to those with MCI?

Please describe what you hope to achieve with this project, and how it will promote the objectives of MCIEP. How will you measure success(i.e. what data will you collect?).

3. Collaboration and Involvement

- i. In the interest of promoting a collaborative approach to research, how will this proposal effectively contribute to other areas of research, or involve other disciplines, organizations, or industry?

Describe how the proposal might promote collaboration inside and outside of MCIEP.

- ii. How will this project involve adults with MCI and their care networks in the ongoing research?

Describe how you plan to involve people with MCI in defining the problem, developing solutions or programs and testing those solutions or programs.

4. Estimated Duration and Budget

i. Select or provide your estimated duration:

Semester 1-year Other: _____

ii. Expected budget: _____

iii. Budget categories (salary, tuition, materials, travel, etc):

Please submit completed PDF to Kimberly.seaton@design.gatech.edu by 5pm on August 29, 2019.