Age-Friendly University Project Grants Program

Guidelines

The Centre on Aging, in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Commitments, invites UCalgary faculty and staff to apply for Age-Friendly University (AFU) project funding.

Applications open: September 8, 2025

Deadline to apply: November 3, 2025 at 4:00 P.M.

Description

Funded by the Centre on Aging and supported by the Office of Institutional Commitments, the AFU Project Grants Program aims to make UCalgary more age-friendly. Since the university joined the AFU Global Network in November 2018, the Centre has advanced research, education, and community engagement initiatives that support and benefit older adults. This funding program enables faculty and staff across the university to contribute to this important work by developing and launching their own AFU initiatives.

Click here to learn more about the AFU movement and related initiatives at UCalgary.

Value and Duration

Grants of up to $40,000 are available to support projects that enhance UCalgary's age-friendliness.

Project timelines must not exceed 2 years. All funding will be disbursed to successful applicants by March 31, 2026, therefore projects should begin on April 1, 2026. For projects involving research, ethics approval must be obtained before funds are released.

Eligibility

Principal Applicants

Faculty and staff with continuous employment at UCalgary are eligible to apply as principal applicants. This includes individuals with contingent term or clinical faculty appointments.

To be eligible to hold project funds at UCalgary, applicants must also meet one of the following criteria:
- Have an academic appointment
- Be at Management level M1 or above
- Be at Professional level P3 or above
- Be at Research level R3 or above
- Be at Technical Professional level T3 or above

<u>Co-applicants</u>

Individuals who are not UCalgary employees or who have non-continuous employment may participate as co-applicants. This includes those with adjunct, emeritus, sessional, or limited term appointments, as well as postdoctoral associates, students, and community members.

Staff who do not meet the criteria listed above to hold project funds may participate as co-applicants.

Collaborative projects involving individuals from multiple UCalgary units are encouraged.

<u>Projects</u>

Project proposals must align with the goal of the funding program and contribute to UCalgary's age-friendliness. Eligible projects may support research, teaching and learning, student affairs, human resources, services and resources, or outreach and engagement.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting research on age-friendliness and age-inclusivity within the university environment.
- Creating or updating courses or micro-credentials to include content related to aging and older adults.
- Implementing inclusive teaching and learning strategies that address the needs of age-diverse students.
- Enhancing services related to student recruitment, admission, advising, or career development to better support age-diverse learners.
- Enhancing services related to hiring, promotion, professional development, and retirement planning to better support age-diverse faculty and staff.
- Expanding programs that offer health, wellness, caregiving, or technology support for age-diverse students, faculty, and staff.
- Developing or expanding initiatives that connect older adults—such as retirees, alumni, and community members—with the campus community.
- Designing or enhancing lifelong learning opportunities available through the university.
- Creating or improving programs that foster intergenerational engagement and collaboration on campus.

If the proposed project involves university policy, labour relations, collective agreements, occupational health and safety, or other legal matters, applicants must consult the appropriate university office(s).

Proposals must be reviewed and approved by the leadership of the principal applicant's unit, including the Department Head and Dean (or their equivalents), before submission. For collaborative proposals, support from the leadership of each participating unit is strongly recommended. One individual must be designated as the principal applicant to receive the funds and assume responsibility for reporting requirements.

Project Considerations

Applicants should ensure their proposals address the following key considerations. These elements will help demonstrate the project's value and its alignment with the goal of the funding program.

- **AFU Principles**: Clearly explain how the project advances <u>one or more of the ten guiding principles</u> of an AFU.
- **Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Principles:** Describe how the project incorporates equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility principles, particularly related to older age and/or ageism.
- **Collaboration**: Where applicable, demonstrate meaningful collaboration across faculties, departments, and/or administrative units.
- **Innovation**: Propose a new initiative or an enhancement of an existing one, incorporating an innovative approach.
- **Feasibility**: Present a realistic timeline of activities with achievable outcomes within a 2-year period.
- **Budget**: Provide a well-justified and reasonable budget that aligns with the project's objectives and activities and complies with UCalgary's funding policies.
- **Evaluation**: Define clear metrics to measure the project's success and outline the evaluation plan and process.
- **Impact and Sustainability**: Describe the project's potential to deliver meaningful benefits to members of the university community and/or the broader older adult population. Explain how the project is designed for long-term sustainability, including plans to maintain or expand its activities beyond the award term.

Please use respectful and appropriate language when referring to older adults (see the 'Terminology' section for guidance).

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Terminology

The following examples highlight both problematic and preferred terms, along with explanations to support respectful and inclusive language when talking about older adults.

General Terms for Older Adults

Problematic:
- the elderly
- elders
- elderly people
- the aged
- aging dependents
- seniors
- senior citizens

Preferred:
- older adults
- older people
- the older population

Explanation: The problematic terms often reinforce stereotypes or present older adults as a single, uniform group. For example, terms like "seniors" and "senior citizens" can carry outdated or patronizing connotations. The term "elders" is also avoided, as it can be confused with "Elders"—a specific term used in Indigenous communities to refer to individuals with deep knowledge of Indigenous histories, traditions, and ways of life. In this context, individuals are not defined solely by their age.

Specific Ages of Older Adults

Problematic:
- old men

Preferred:
- older men
- men between the ages of 65 and 75
- octogenarians

Explanation: Use precise language when possible. Referring to specific age ranges acknowledges the diversity of older adults and avoids vague or dismissive labels like "old."

Diseases or Disorders Affecting Older Adults

Problematic:
- Suffering from dementia
- Frail
- Afflicted with
- Stricken with

Preferred:
- Living with dementia
- Living with frailty
- Diagnosed with
- Experiencing

Explanation: Problematic phrases can imply helplessness or reduce a person to their diagnosis. Use person-first language that recognizes individuals as more than their condition and avoids framing illness or disability in terms of victimhood.

To learn more about appropriate terminology, refer to the sources below.

American Psychological Association. (n.d.). *Bias-free language: Age*. APA Style. https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/age

Gerontological Society of America. (n.d.). *Reframing aging: Journal manuscript guidelines*. https://static.primary.prod.gcms.the-infra.com/static/site/gsa/document/Reframing_Aging_Journal_Manuscript_Guidelines.pdf?node=412d7ccc31fac597b9de

Terms and Conditions

Successful applicants who accept funding agree to comply with the following terms and conditions.

Grant Administration
- Funds from the Centre on Aging will be transferred directly to the principal grant holder in a single installment. The principal grant holder will receive a Notice of Award, which includes the accounting details required to establish a dedicated project for managing the funds. It is the principal grant holder's responsibility to complete the necessary steps to activate this project.
- All funds must be used within the 2-year award period. Any unspent funds remaining at the end of the term must be returned to the Centre on Aging within 60 days. Funding extensions of up to one year may be granted under exceptional circumstances, subject to university approval.
- If the principal grant holder leaves the project before the end of the award period, a co-applicant may take over management of the funds, provided they meet the eligibility criteria for grant holders. If no co-applicant is eligible, all unspent funds must be returned to the Centre on Aging within 60 days of the principal grant holder's departure.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Eligible expenses are guided by UCalgary policies (e.g., the Travel and Expense Reimbursement Handbook) and must support the goal of the funding program. All expenses must be paid in accordance with UCalgary procedures.

Eligible expenses may include:
- Project personnel (e.g., undergraduate or graduate students, postdoctoral associates, research assistants, project managers)
- Materials and supplies
- Meeting related costs (e.g., room bookings, catering, AV)
- Hospitality (e.g., non-alcoholic refreshments, meals)
- Research equipment
- Travel related to research or fieldwork
- Honoraria for research participants
- Community engagement activities
- Development of educational events, workshops, or materials
- Knowledge translation or community mobilization activities

Ineligible expenses include:

- Fees or remuneration for principal and co-applicants (with the exception of postdoctoral associates, students, and community members)
- Travel for conferences
- Visiting professorships or lectureships
- General operating costs of existing programs or services
- Capital expenditures for infrastructure renovations or additions

<u>Engagement with the Centre on Aging and Office of Institutional Commitments</u>

- Grant holders are expected to meet periodically (i.e., at least once per year) with both the Centre on Aging and the Office of Institutional Commitments throughout the award term. These joint meetings serve as informal check-ins for project updates and provide opportunities to access guidance or expertise related to aging, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, sustainability, and mental health and well-being.
- Grant holders may also be invited to participate in activities organized by the Centre on Aging and the Office of Institutional Commitments, such as leadership meetings or public events, to share updates on their projects.

<u>Annual Reporting</u>

- The principal grant holder must submit a report to the Centre on Aging at the end of each fiscal year (by March 31) during the award period. The report should include a summary of the project's progress, details on the use of funds, key outcomes to date, and an explanation of any delays in the project timeline, along with a plan to address or adjust for those delays.

<u>Recognition of Support</u>

- Grant holders must acknowledge the Centre on Aging in all public presentations, communications, publications, and other materials related to the funded project. The Centre's logo must be included on any materials produced. To obtain the logo, please contact aging@ucalgary.ca.

Application Items and Process

- A completed application form.
- Signatures from the principal applicant, as well as the Department Head and Dean (or their equivalents) of the principal applicant's unit.

The application must be typed, single-spaced, and use Arial 11-point font (or an equivalent). All required information must be compiled into a single digital PDF and submitted online to be considered for funding.

Evaluation Criteria and Process

Applications will be competitively reviewed by a committee established by the Centre on Aging and the Office of Institutional Commitments. Funding decisions will be based on merit, using the criteria and scoring scheme outlined below.

Relevance and Innovation (40%)
- Alignment of the project with the objective of the AFU Project Grants Program.
- Demonstrated connection to at least one of the ten guiding principles of an AFU.
- Integration of equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility principles.
- The extent to which the project introduces a novel, creative, or compelling idea or approach to enhance age-friendliness at UCalgary.

Quality and Feasibility (30%)
- Relevant experience and expertise of the applicant(s).
- Appropriateness and clarity of the planned activities.
- Appropriateness of the timeline and likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes.
- Appropriateness and justification of the requested budget.
- Appropriateness and clarity of the metrics and process for evaluating success.

Impact and Sustainability (30%)
- Anticipated significance and lasting impact of the project's outcomes for the university community and/or the broader older adult population.
- Likelihood that the project will become a sustainable initiative beyond the award term.

Each application will be scored in the three evaluation categories above. Review committee members will assign a score using the scale below. Scores will be weighted according to the percentage associated with each criterion to calculate a final score.

Score	Descriptor
5-6	Very good to excellent
4-4.9	Good to very good

| 3-3.9 | Satisfactory to good |
| Below 3 | Unsatisfactory and unfundable |

Contact Information

Questions about the AFU Project Grants Program or the application process should be directed to the Centre on Aging.

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