**Learning Objectives and Assignment**

***Learning Objectives***

In collaboration with the CIHR Institute of Aging and with support and guidance from McMaster University and the McMaster Institute for Research on Aging (MIRA), SPA 2021 will provide you with an advanced training program that crosses disciplines, institutions and geographical boundaries. Quality population-based longitudinal data can be instrumental in spurring mechanistic and translational research activities, addressing the needs of the current aged population and providing ongoing insight into the needs and requirements of future aging cohorts. The program will include lectures, small-group sessions with mentors and a social calendar to help solidify connections.

During SPA 2021, you will:

* Learn about the methodologies used in longitudinal studies of health and aging;
* Explore analytical approaches to the study of longitudinal data;
* Frame longitudinal research questions to include interdisciplinary research on aging and health;
* Increase awareness of research opportunities and the availability of data for trainees to undertake research using longitudinal studies on aging;
* Explore opportunities for data harmonization and pooling across national and international longitudinal studies;
* Understand advantages and disadvantages of the data harmonization of longitudinal studies;
* Learn how to effectively communicate research findings and develop skills in knowledge translation of longitudinal studies for various audiences, including the general public, newsmakers, health professionals, policymakers, decision-makers and industry;
* Develop skills in grant writing and peer review;
* Interact with leading researchers and academic mentors in the field of longitudinal research from across the country and abroad, thereby building a professional interdisciplinary network of dedicated researchers.

***Assignment***

During SPA 2021, you and your team members will be working towards completing a CLSA Catalyst Grant application. As mentioned in the pre-work section, in advance of programming, we would like you to start thinking about a topic you would like focus on. We encourage you to connect with your group members either live or asynchronously to start narrowing in on the topic you will be working on over the course of the program.

During SPA 2021, you will be completing a CLSA Catalyst Grant Application. Though this form has been modified slightly to align with SPA programming, this grant application can be used after this program to submit a data request and complete the analysis you propose in your application. We have asked your mentors to share samples with you of their own grant applications to help guide you as you complete your own.

ATTACH ASSIGNMENT

We recommend you familiarize yourself with a few helpful tools to help you navigate this application, all of which are available on the CLSA’s website:

<https://www.clsa-elcv.ca/researchers/data-support-documentation>

**Questionnaires** show you what questions participants are asked and help you to understand skip patterns and which options are available to participants. Understanding these questionaries will help you plan which data will be most helpful to answering the questions you are proposing.

**Data Dictionaries** provide information about each variable in a dataset. On the CLSA website, you will find data dictionaries corresponding to Baseline Questionnaires, Follow-up 1 Questionnaires and Participant Status data for the most up-to-date version of the CLSA datasets.

The website also includes valuable information about sample weights and derived variables. We recommend you join us at **11 AM ET**  on **April 22nd**  on Zoom for our CLSA data orientation session to learn more about how to make all this information work for you.