

# REQUEST FOR APPLICATION (RFA)

Designation of Excellence in Person-Centered Long-Term Care  
2023 RFA & Award Initiation



THE  
MAYER-ROTHSCHILD  
FOUNDATION™

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## 1. OVERVIEW

### a. Notice of Award

The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation of Chicago, Illinois is issuing this Request for Application (RFA). We are seeking a lead academic partner for the continued design, development, validation and implementation of a national *Designation of Excellence* in Person-Centered Long-Term Care for America’s long-term nursing homes, independent and assisted living communities, and dementia and memory care residences that are serving America’s older adults and their families. We envision the identified academic partner engaging with five care communities located in diverse geographical locations across the country, serving as Centers of Excellence in promulgating this work.

The Foundation seeks to develop a firmly grounded consumer- and research-friendly designation instrument that denotes person-centered excellence in long-term care settings, and that can both inform and be widely adopted by the long-term care industry.

Such a *Designation of Excellence* should serve as a tool to inform the public about best practices through creating awareness of and demand for such care facilities in their communities and nationwide.

The Designation would also serve as an industry barometer to recognize those best institutional behaviors and practices which are excellent and person-centered in their design, delivery and outcomes, and promote the wide acceptance and implementation of such behaviors and practices.

Phase Three of this Designation project is denoted as Testing and Validation. In Phase Three, the active research will build upon the successes of the work of the Foundation’s dyad partners during the First and Second Phases of this project, The University of Maine Center on Aging and The Cedars of Portland, Maine. That work can be seen here: [www.pccexcellence.org](http://www.pccexcellence.org)

### b. Important Dates

Letter of Intent Response Window	May 1, 2023 -June 15, 2023
Application Response Deadline	September 1, 2023
Notice of Awardees	November 15, 2023
Earliest Start Date	December 1, 2023

## 2. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

### a. Purpose & Longer-Term Goal

The purpose of this RFA is two-fold:

- To develop systems, methods, measures, tools, processes and other protocols for identifying excellence in person-centered long-term care for America’s long-term nursing homes, independent and assisted living communities, and dementia and memory care residences that are serving America’s older adults and their families
- To test the design and implement a sustainable instrument—the *Designation of Excellence*—that reflects state-of-the-art evidence-based design and best practices for delivery of person-centered long-term care in residential settings across a 50-state canvas

The longer-term goal of this initiative is to develop and implement a research platform that can be utilized in multiple ways:

- To improve our understanding of the factors that impact person-centered long-term care and offer insights on how to use this information to continuously improve care
- To support state-of-the-art research opportunities in improving person-centered long-term care, including conducting longitudinal studies dedicated to better understanding and improving the lives of older adults living in care communities, and considering acceptance and compliance with the updated life safety codes introduced by the Hulda B. & Maurice L. Rothschild Foundation

## b. Background

The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation, with its funding Foundation, The Hulda B. & Maurice L. Rothschild Foundation, is the only philanthropic organization in the United States solely dedicated to promoting person-centered care in long-term care residential communities serving older adults and their families. The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation was founded to honor the memory and further the pioneering work and vision of Robert Nathan Mayer, Ph.D. The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation is devoted to improving the experience and quality of life for those older adults living in residential care settings across the country. The Foundation is committed to serving as an active, ongoing partner during the development and implementation of the *Designation of Excellence*.

This effort is informed by the charge below, articulated by Dr. Mayer:

*“Our healthcare delivery system, as it relates to how we treat those receiving care, is at a crossroads. There is a movement, now thirty years old, which at its core seeks to de-institutionalize our healthcare delivery system and to recognize that the person receiving care should be at the center of all that we do; that we should be treating the whole person; not a disease; not a set of symptoms; not a case; not a room number. Today, most long-term care communities are very carefully organized and designed for the efficiency of the clinical staff; productivity of the administrative personnel; a deficiency-free response to regulations; the maximum reimbursement from third party payers; and the cost-effective and value-engineered design of the built environment. Virtually forgotten in this complex of competing priorities, demands and financial constraints are the very people the system should be designed to support: the resident and their family.”*

*“The adoption of a single, unified set of person-centered characteristics which would be common to all has to date not been possible for a field still in its infancy. With no collective understanding as to what constitutes person-centered care or even common nomenclature, any care community can (and increasingly does) proudly proclaim that they are person-centered practitioners. Sadly, it doesn’t take very many communities who have merely adopted person-centered window-dressing to undermine the legitimacy of those who have worked hard and long to fully integrate these values and are really making a difference in the quality of life of their residents. Without a credible and widely recognized third-party designation, how is any consumer of long-term care services to distinguish one from the other?”*

*“Extensive marketing research shows that today’s consumers demand convenient, hassle-free, responsive service. They also value choice, access, and simplicity. As these same dimensions are characteristics of true person-centered care, we believe that there is a pent-up demand for this approach, were it understood to be available.”*

Mayer RN.....: “Successful Philanthropy Requires Culture Change”. In Culture Change in Elder Care (Audrey S. Weiner and Judah L. Ronch, editors), Health Professionals Press, Baltimore, Maryland, ISBN 978-1-932529-86-2, pp. 321-353, 2013.

The *Designation of Excellence*, once fully implemented, seeks to stimulate broad consumer demand for excellence in person-centered care in nursing homes and assisted living communities across the country, while at the same time creating industry awareness and interest in the advantages of person-centered care and principals as an organizing factor in business planning and organizational behavior in the long-term care marketplace.

The *Designation of Excellence* should serve to:

- Increase consumer and industry knowledge about best-practices in person-centered long-term care
- Stimulate long-term care providers to embrace and implement best practices in person-centered care
- Provide clear guidelines for staff, residents and families to assess if best practices are being utilized
- Establish a consumer tool/app to inform the public about best practices in person-centered long-term care, creating expectations of care communities using best practices
- Help monitor the industry and identify and promote emerging best practices and continuous improvement
- Celebrate, highlight and provide differentiation for those care communities that are demonstrating deeply adopted person-centered principles and practices across measurable indices of excellence

#### **c. Consumer & Industry Awareness**

The Foundation seeks to motivate consumers of long-term care services to know about and demand the “Good Housekeeping Seal of Excellence” equivalent (in this case The Mayer-Rothschild Seal of Excellence) as they seek opportunities and solutions for family members and themselves.

The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation seeks to motivate the long-term care industry writ large to adopt person-centered principles and practices and to use this adoption as a means to create and support market share and differentiation in supplying choice, dignity, security and excellence in services and living environments for seniors living in long-term care settings across the country.

Older Adults, their families, nursing home owners and operators, clinicians and care providers, national organizations promoting elder care reform and the industry serving nursing homes and assisted living communities comprise the industry targets of this initiative.

#### **d. Award Information**

The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation *Designation of Excellence* in Person-Centered Long-Term Care is being developed through four funding cycles, each one 12 months long. These phases of funding represent the development of the Designation over a four-year period through significant Planning, Discovery, Testing and Validation, and Launch milestones. Each funding cycle will have a proposal review, mid-project report and post-project evaluation. The first two phases of this work have been successfully completed by partnership between the Foundation and The University of Maine Center on Aging and The Cedars of Portland, Maine. Phase 3 (current RFA) will focus on testing and validation of the Phase 1 and 2 work. The funding cycles are described below:

Additional funding cycles (e.g. work in Designation sustainability, marketing, and promulgation) will be considered by the Foundation at a future date.

## FUNDING CYCLES

### PHASE ONE: PLANNING & DISCOVERY

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COMPLETED

University of Maine Center on Aging *and* The Cedars

### PHASE TWO: DISCOVERY & VALIDATION

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COMPLETED

University of Maine Center on Aging *and* The Cedars

### PHASE THREE: Available TESTING and VALIDATION 2024

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Total funds available to single academic institution	\$250,000
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Total funds available to institutional partners	\$150,000
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Maximum funds available to each institutional partner	\$30,000
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Duration of Testing and Validation Funding Award	12 months
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### PHASE FOUR: LAUNCH

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Total funds available to academic institution	\$250,000
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Total funds available to institutional partner	\$150,000
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Maximum funds available to each institutional partner	\$30,000
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Duration of Launch Funding Award	12 months
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## 3. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS & LETTER OF INTENT

### a. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants must be faculty at a United States land-based college or university and able to serve as Principal Investigator (PI) in conceptualizing and operationalizing The Mayer-Rothschild *Designation of Excellence*. The applicant is required to partner with five (5) not-for-profit (501 c3) care community institutions that have the capacity and vision to co-design, pilot test, bring to scale and sustain the *Designation of Excellence* on a broad national basis. Each would serve as a distinct Center of Excellence for one year and be awarded a \$30,000 stipend from the Foundation. The successful project partners must share the vision for improving the lives of older adults living in long-term care and have current experience and expertise in the long-term care nursing home domain. The five Centers of Excellence should be geographically distinct and represent the broad diversity of our nation. (26 care communities have participated in the research and data collection to date over the past two years in designing the *Designation of Excellence*, and the Foundation can be helpful in matching applicants with top care communities.)

## b. Letter of Intent (LOI) (six pages maximum)

Each applicant must first submit an LOI for consideration of an invitation to submit a full proposal to the Foundation.

The LOI signals an interest and intent to apply for the award. The LOI should include the following key elements:

- **Specific Aims:** please provide a one-page summary of the Specific Aims of the project. These should demonstrate a grasp of issues affecting delivery of service of person-centered long-term care, and recognition of the complexity of this multi-faceted project. For Phase 3 of the project, the Aims should focus on testing, validation and implementation planning of the work completed in Phases 1-2.
- **Project Narrative:** please provide a narrative not to exceed five pages. The narrative should include an innovative project plan with clear demonstration of capacity to manage this project successfully to conclusion. The narrative should focus on Phase 3 but include brief plans for Phase 4 (Designation launch) and the ongoing vision for sustaining the Designation.

In addition, please provide the Foundation with the following:

- **Key Personnel:** Identify faculty leadership and key non-profit leadership, briefly summarizing their roles and responsibilities for the project
- **Biosketches:** Please include biosketches for the academic PI and any co-investigator

## c. Format

The LOI must be a maximum of 6 pages (Aims + Narrative) following NIH guidelines for font, line spacing, and formatting. All LOI components must be submitted electronically using The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation website at [www.mayerrothschild.org](http://www.mayerrothschild.org). No additional materials will be accepted at the LOI stage.

For further information please contact our Executive Director, Paul Nebenzahl at [paul@mayerrothschild.org](mailto:paul@mayerrothschild.org)

## 4. FULL APPLICATION

(to be submitted only upon request from The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation)

### a. Specific Aims (one page)

Please write in clear, non-technical terms that can be understood by a range of audiences with varied levels of expertise

### b. Table of Contents (one page)

Include a Table of Contents with page numbers for key sections of your application

### c. Research Plan (12 pages)

The Research Plan should primarily focus on the specific award period (Phase 3: Testing and Validation). The research plan includes a statement of the project's overall goals, strategy to achieve the proposed Aims, anticipated outcomes, how success of the proposed plan will be measured, potential pitfalls of the proposed plan, and long-term implementation design to sustain the Designation program. The research plan should include sections for Significance and Innovation.

In addition to the above-described sections, please include the following in your Research Plan:

#### i. Timeline

A Timeline should be included (ideally in graphic format) for the Phase 3 proposal period, with indication of key milestones in planning, designing, testing, and implementing the *Designation of Excellence* in all its private and public phases.

#### ii. Data Management Plan

This project is required to create a research platform that will support investigations of innovative approaches to person-centered long-term care and improvement in quality of life for residents and their families. To support the development of a platform for ongoing quality improvement, a Data Management Plan that includes the following components is required:

Description of the types and format of data to be collected, and how the resulting de-identified data will be organized, stored and preserved (REDCap is preferred to allow for translational research across institutional and acuity lines)

Provide a plan to address the study participant's consent process (ex. opt-out) to enable de-identified data to be shared broadly for the current application as well as for future research

Describe the role of a data manager throughout the period of the award and provide a data analytics plan for evaluation

#### iii. Evaluation Plan

Each stage of the project will require evaluative actions to inform and revise the subsequent steps. Self-assessment, evaluative survey tools, site visits and other evaluative methodologies should all be evaluated and included. Include specific information about plans to incorporate a series of internal evaluative tools that can help monitor the progress of development of the *Designation of Excellence* through its various proposed stages of design, testing and implementation as well as follow-up.

Recognizing that advances in theory and practices will necessitate raising the bar for continuing care communities, the Foundation seeks an evaluation plan that incorporates continuous improvement imperatives for those facilities that achieve *Designation of Excellence*.

#### iv. Sustainability Plan

Over the course of the project, it is expected that a firm understanding of the cost-benefits of the *Designation of Excellence* will be established to ensure a pragmatic approach for today's long-term care communities. The proposal should include a sustainability plan for the project that will be firmly in place at the end of the four-year award period.

#### d. Ethics Statement

The applicants should confirm that before any funding will commence, they will obtain approval from the applicable Internal Review Board (IRB).

#### e. Budget & Justification

The NIH budget format in Excel should be used, indicating entries for the year of requested funding. Forms are provided to complete the budget summaries and can be accessed by clicking (here):

The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation, an operating foundation, does not fund indirect costs in any of the awards it makes. Awards will not support the purchase or maintenance of capital equipment as defined by the NIH.

The budget justification must provide a detailed explanation of roles, responsibilities and deliverables



for all key personnel, projected salaries, travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, and any other significant expenditures. Salaries cannot exceed the current NIH salary cap.

If additional funds are needed to implement the proposed project as described, please provide a strategy for seeking funds from other sources to support this application.

**f. Key Personnel**

The NIH key personnel format should be used. List all members of the collaborating teams and lead staff essential to in your application, including names, degrees, titles, and organization.

**g. Biosketches (five pages per Biosketch, in NIH format)**

Please include a Biosketch for the academic Principal Investigator and any Co-Investigators, conforming with NIH Biosketch requirements.

**h. Participating Care Communities as Centers of Excellence**

The Foundation seeks the active participation of five geographically and demographically disparate top-rated care communities as testing and validation partners in support of the successful lead academic research institution for Phase Three of the study. The purpose of having these Centers of Excellence engaged in Phase Three of this research initiative is to ensure diverse representation in data collection, resident and family engagement and participation, and staff input and guidance. This arrangement offers the potential to review the work of our research partner in real time at the practice level as we proceed. The Foundation has been fortunate to work with many top care communities in the country in pursuit of excellence in person-centered care; if an academic applicant would like to be introduced to some of these care communities, our Foundation is happy to make an introduction to assist in submitting a complete application. The Foundation will issue an award of \$30,000 in 2023 to each of the five participating care communities to support their own resident, family, and staff engagement and leadership in building The Mayer-Rothschild Foundation *Designation of Excellence* Person-Centered Long-Term Care.

**i. Letters of Support**

Your application should include a letter of support from your institution and each participating care community demonstrating institutional commitments. Additional letters from key personnel and collaborators are welcome as appropriate to demonstrate collaborative support for work outlined in the proposal. These documents may not be read by all reviewers, and as such, should not be used to circumvent page limits elsewhere in the application.

**j. Format**

The proposal must be formatted as follows: 11-point Ariel font, 0.5" margins all sides. All components of the Full Proposal must be submitted electronically to Executive Director Paul Nebenzahl at [paul@mayerrothschild.org](mailto:paul@mayerrothschild.org).

Appendices (none required or accepted)

The Mayer-Rothschild will not accept any additional materials or appendices in review of your response to this RFA. Submitted materials cannot be returned and are exclusively the property of the Foundation.

## 5. APPLICATION REVIEW

### a. Expert Review

The Foundation has an expert team of reviewers who will assist in evaluation of the LOI and Full Proposal process. The Foundation will inform every applicant of their status as decisions are made, entirely by email. However, applicants that are not awarded funding will not receive feedback about their proposal.

### b. Site Visit

The Foundation may make a site visit or visits to award finalists. If such a visit is requested, we will work with your team to accommodate scheduling or location obstacles.

### c. Information or Questions

For further information please contact Executive Director Paul Nebenzahl at [paul@mayerrothschild.org](mailto:paul@mayerrothschild.org)

Paul Nebenzahl is available by telephone M-F 9:00 a.m. CT – 4:00 p.m. CT by calling (224) 616-0103. Please expect to receive a response within 24 hours.