

ISL Clinical Research Working Group Updates and Plan for 2026-2027

Goals and Key Deliverables

The primary purpose of the ISL Clinical Research Working Group is to strengthen clinical and translational aging research across FSU by facilitating collaboration, identifying shared research needs and barriers, connecting investigators with existing institutional resources, and developing partnerships that can address gaps in research support. The group also aims to strengthen connections among investigators, trainees, clinicians, community partners, and the ISL Community Advisory Board to ensure that aging-related research is responsive to both scientific and community priorities.

Rather than duplicating research infrastructure already available across FSU, the Working Group will emphasize coordination, communication, and partnership with relevant university offices and programs.

Key areas of focus include:

- Identifying common barriers and needs affecting clinical and translational aging research and connecting investigators with relevant FSU resources and expertise.
- Supporting research workforce development through the Clinical Research Assistant Foundations course and exploration of additional aging-research training opportunities.
- Strengthening participant recruitment and community engagement, including supporting the updates and recruitment for the ISL Registry.
- Facilitating interdisciplinary and community connections that may lead to collaborative manuscripts, pilot projects, grant applications, or other scholarly activities.
- Strengthening connections among ISL investigators, the Community Advisory Board, FSU Health, and regional community organizations.
- Creating opportunities for community priorities and perspectives to inform research development and dissemination.

Achievements from the Past Year

Over the past year, the Clinical Research Working Group has focused on identifying shared needs and developing partnerships that can strengthen clinical and translational research within ISL.

Major activities and accomplishments included:

- Development of the Clinical Research Assistant Foundations course in partnership with the FSU Office of Research, OHSP, and others with a corresponding digital badge designed to provide undergraduate students with standardized foundational preparation for participation in clinical research. This course has been fully developed and is ready for testing. We expect to roll out the course to the full university this semester.
- Engagement in planning for the transition of the ISL participant registry to the FSU Health portal, with attention to improving participant engagement and investigator access to recruitment resources.
- Identification of opportunities to broaden the Working Group's focus toward interdisciplinary collaboration, including collaborative scholarship and grant development.
- Planning engagement with community organizations such as Alzheimer's Project and the DCCI Big Bend Task Force.

Plans for the Coming Year: 2026–2027

The Working Group's priorities for the coming year will emphasize achievable activities that leverage partnerships and existing resources rather than creating duplicative infrastructure.

- **Support implementation of the Clinical Research Assistant Foundations course.** The group will provide feedback on implementation and evaluation of the course. We will identify opportunities to connect trained students with ISL investigators and aging-related research experiences.
- **Contribute to the ISL registry transition.** The Working Group will provide investigator perspectives on updating the registry and help identify ways the registry can effectively support aging-research recruitment and participant engagement.
- **Identify shared research needs and strengthen connections with existing FSU resources.** The group will identify recurring challenges faced by investigators and, when appropriate, engage relevant FSU offices, programs, or research cores to identify existing solutions or opportunities for partnership.
- **Facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration.** Working Group meetings will provide opportunities for members to share research interests, datasets, methods, works in progress, funding opportunities, and potential ideas for collaborative manuscripts, pilot projects, or grant proposals.
- **Increase integration with the ISL Community Advisory Board.** The Working Group will explore practical mechanisms for incorporating community perspectives into research planning, including occasional joint discussions, community feedback on emerging research priorities, and opportunities to share research findings with the community.
- **Strengthen community partnerships.** The group will explore collaborative opportunities with Alzheimer's Project, DCCI Big Bend, and other organizations around priorities identified by older adults, caregivers, families, and community service providers. If supported by the group, we aim to establish a community-to-research pipeline in which priorities identified by the Community Advisory Board and community partners are translated into collaborative research, education, evaluation, or grant-development activities through the Clinical Research Working Group.
- **Explore future aging-research training opportunities.** Building on the RA Foundations course, the group will begin considering how existing FSU training programs, faculty expertise, and institutional resources might be connected to create a stronger clinical and translational aging research training pathway, including longer-term opportunities for institutional training funding (e.g., T32 mechanism).

Opportunities for Member Participation

Participation will be designed to be flexible and appropriate to members' available time. Members may contribute by bringing forward a research challenge or opportunity for discussion, sharing relevant expertise or institutional resources, identifying potential collaborators or funding opportunities, mentoring trainees, participating in a focused project or writing group, or contributing to discussions with community partners and the Community Advisory Board. Members will not be expected to participate in every initiative.