



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

The Owens Observer

Newsletter of the
Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research

October 13, 2025

In this month's newsletter, we are pleased to welcome several **new affiliates** to OIBR, many of whom are new to UGA. Also included in the newsletter is an article on **Soroya McFarlane's** most recent grant, which will allow her and her team, which includes OIBR affiliate **Ishtiaque Fazlul**, to develop AI tools to promote maternal health. In the Policy Updates section, you'll find hot-off-the-press information about **NIH's new open access requirements**. Be sure to also check out details of the **OIBR Pivot fund**, along with a variety of additional resources to advance your research and funding potential. Finally, I look forward to seeing many of you at Wednesday's **annual meeting** at the Hotel Indigo. It promises to be our best attended annual meeting ever, which speaks to the continued vibrancy of the social and behavioral sciences at UGA. See you there!

Jody Clay-Warner
Director

Upcoming Events

REMINDER FOR THOSE WHO RSVP'D YES.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU ON WEDNESDAY!



 Save

Owens Institute for
Behavioral Research
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

— ANNUAL —
MEETING

OCTOBER 15
12:00 - 1:30PM

HOTEL INDIGO, RIALTO ROOM
500 COLLEGE AVE. ATHENS
LUNCH WILL BE SERVED

Funding News

Congratulations to our Distinguished Scholars, Affiliate and Grant Development Program graduates who have recently received research project funding



Grace Ahn

Title: Virtual Risks and Hero Projects: Activating Transformative Community Actions for Preparedness Against Extreme Weather Events through Extended Reality and Artificial Intelligence

Agency: National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

Project Dates: 8/1/2025 - 7/31/2027

Award Amount: \$391,865.

Summary: This project leverages assets from a previously funded NOAA project and the research team's expertise in using immersive technologies to translate critical hazardous weather information with these theory-driven and evidence-based objectives: (1) amplify the impact of risk communication through mixed-reality (MR) simulations of hazardous weather events (hurricane, wildfire) that can localize the experience of risk in the user's physical space (2) co-develop transformative action plans for emergency preparedness with key stakeholders (emergency managers, local government representatives, community members) to increase the resilience of communities at risk for hurricanes (Florida) and wildfires (Oregon); (3) develop and test AIWX, a prompt engineered to leverage the power of artificial intelligence to summarize and synthesize large volumes of weather information to assist decision-making when hazardous weather events are imminent.

Research Spotlight

Harnessing AI to Advance Maternal Health



[Learn More](#)

Faculty News

Welcome New Affiliates

Jessica Fernandez, Assistant Professor, College of Environment & Design

Hee Lee, Professor, School of Social Work

Caroline Lisee, Assistant Professor, Kinesiology

Rob Lynall, Associate Professor, Kinesiology

Christopher Modlesky, Professor, Kinesiology

Julianne Schmidt, Georgia Athletic Association Endowed Professor, Kinesiology

Gillian Slee, Assistant Professor, Sociology

Julia Thomas, Assistant Professor, Sociology

Opportunities

Save

Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis



CARMA

This is just a friendly reminder that the [Consortium for the Advancement of Research Methods and Analysis \(CARMA\)](#) is an incredibly valuable resource available to you via OIBR's sponsorship of UGA's institutional membership. As a UGA faculty member, you can set up a profile, sign up for programs and courses, and request to receive their newsletter. Please contact Kim Cherewick at ksilvis@uga.edu with any questions.

OIBR Pivot Funds 2026

The OIBR Pivot Fund 2026 allows researchers to continue to conduct important work, while responding to the current funding climate. Funds can be used to collect data, purchase data sets or equipment, or for other needs, as identified by the investigator. Funds cannot be used for conference travel or personnel funding (faculty or student). The budget cannot exceed \$5,000.

The application should contain: 1) one paragraph describing your current research; 2) one to two sentences explaining how you are pivoting your research; 3) one page describing the project for which you are seeking funding, your qualifications for conducting the proposed research, and intended external grant mechanism(s); 4) budget, budget justification, and timeline; and 5) a current CV.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the OIBR Leadership Team. Send applications (as a single PDF in the order listed above) to oibr@uga.edu, with the subject line "Pivot Funds."

New Quantitative Consulting Center Focused on Education Research

Education researchers encounter unique challenges in the pursuit of knowledge about teachers and learners in formal and informal educational contexts. Therefore, education researchers need specialized support from experts who have experience with and understand these constraints and challenges.

The purpose of the Quantitative Methods Consulting Center (QMC) is to provide statistical consulting for education researchers. Meetings are free of charge, and they can offer assistance on small- and large-scale projects. Check out their [website](#) for more information about the services they offer.

Policy Updates

NIH Public Access Policy Update for Researchers

Beginning **July 1, 2025**, NIH implemented its updated **Public Access Policy**. For researchers, the key change is that the **Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM)** of any NIH-funded article accepted on or after this date must be deposited in **PubMed Central** immediately upon acceptance — embargo periods will no longer apply.

Compliance with the policy can be achieved by either 1) a journal submitting the Final Published Article to PubMed Central on the grantee's behalf, or 2) the grantee submitting their Author Accepted Manuscript (final peer-reviewed manuscript) to PubMed Central manually.

How to prepare:

- Read your author agreement closely and assess compliance options before signing.
- Confirm in writing whether a journal will submit the Final Published Article to PubMed Central with no embargo on your behalf.
- If publisher submission is not feasible, use the NIH Manuscript Submission System to submit your Author Accepted Manuscript (final peer-reviewed manuscript) to PubMed Central when accepted for publication.

This shift ensures that NIH-funded research is openly accessible to colleagues, practitioners, and the public as soon as it's published. Investigators should plan ahead for compliance by confirming journal submission policies, budgeting for potential publication costs, and reviewing NIH guidance on licensing and reporting.

For details, visit the [NIH Public Access Policy overview](#).

OIBR News

Online Open Office Hours

Kim Cherewick, Assistant Director, and **Jenny Claire Carey**, Post Award Operations Manager, are hosting weekly office hours. Drop in via Zoom from **10-11am every Monday** to ask any grant-related questions. Contact Kim at ksilvis@uga.edu to receive the meeting link or with any questions.



Have news? Please send kudos, announcements or other items to Andrea Horsman at ahorsman@uga.edu. Distribution occurs monthly on the second Monday of the month. The deadline for submissions is the first Wednesday.

