



# MICROBIAL SCIENCES INITIATIVE FUNDING LANDSCAPE

**Prepared for Harvard University Faculty of  
Arts & Sciences**

**MAY 2025**

In the following report, Hanover Research provides an overview of funding opportunities pertaining to Harvard's Microbial Sciences Initiative.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: KEY FINDINGS

The Harvard University Faculty of Arts & Sciences has sought assistance in identifying funding opportunities aligned with the Microbial Sciences Initiative. Started in 2004, the Initiative is an intellectual epicenter for microbiology, associated with dozens of [faculty](#) and labs across Harvard. The MSI seeks funding pertaining to a variety of topics in the context of microbiology: oceanography, environmental engineering, gut microbiomes, biochemistry, genomics, infectious disease, cancer, immunology, among others, along with interdisciplinary team support. Our research into the most suitable funding opportunities led to the following notable funders and key findings.

## KEY FINDINGS: PROSPECTS

We profile a **total of 40 prospects below**, some of which will likely be familiar to MSI faculty. While many hundreds of funding opportunities could have been included due to being in some way related to microbiology topics, Hanover has attempted to focus only on the best-aligned funders, with a funding floor of \$100,000. We include 11 federal opportunities offered by a wide variety of agencies, along with 29 private funding opportunities offered by private foundations, corporate foundations, and other nonprofit grant-makers.

## KEY FINDINGS: MARGINAL

- There are also many marginally relevant prospects that may be worth considering, which are *not* profiled below; for example, a handful of other NSF programs appeared to be possibly relevant, such as [Molecular Biophysics](#) and [Biomechanics and Mechanobiology](#).
- DOD opportunities such as DARPA's [BTO BAA](#) and the [DEVCOM BAA](#) fund research that includes some applications of microbiology, but in a national defense context (see also [BARDA](#)).

- While we profile the most broadly applicable NIH funding mechanisms below, it may also be worth considering targeted NIH programs such as, e.g., [this R61 FOA](#) or [this NOSI](#). Given the current turbulence in NIH funding (and federal funding generally), we recommend monitoring future NIH announcements.
- Various funders appear to be relevant, but only award a single grant per year and/or award grants well under \$100,000: for example, the [Biocodex Microbiota Foundation](#) awards a single grant of \$50,000 annually; see also the [Crohn's and Colitis Foundation IBD YI Award](#), the [AGA Foundation](#), and [DNA Genotek](#).
- Private funders that may be worth considering include the [Helmsley Trust](#) (for Crohn's disease) and the [Adelson Foundation](#). MSI PIs may also want to consider partnering with local biotech companies (such as Moderna) and life sciences organizations, such as the [Massachusetts Life Sciences Center](#).
- Finally, various funding opportunities may be worth considering with international partners in Europe, Canada, etc.: see, for example, [ESCMID](#), [Novo Nordisk](#), and [Weston](#).

## FUNDERS PROFILED IN THIS REPORT

The summary table below provides an overview of key information regarding the opportunities reviewed in this report. While our research suggests that the funders profiled below are strong fits based on focus area alignment and funding history, an approach to each funder should take into account not only the published guidelines, but the need to establish contact.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF PROSPECTS

FUNDER	RECOMMENDED REQUEST RANGE	APPROACH	FOCUS AREAS	DEADLINE
<a href="#"><u>DOD: CDMRP Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program</u></a>	Capped at \$2.5 million and \$8 million (varies by track)	Apply online	Wide range of medical research topics	June 9, 2025 (pre-applications); projected June 2026
<a href="#"><u>DOD: USAMRDC BAA for Extramural Medical Research</u></a>	\$300,000 to \$5 million over 3-5 years	Apply online	Wide range of medical research topics	Rolling until July 2028 (will be renewed)
<a href="#"><u>DOE: Environmental System Science</u></a>	Up to \$1 million	Await RFP	Environmental system science, including microbial processes	Projected early 2026
<a href="#"><u>NIH: Collaborative Grant for Multidisciplinary Teams (RM1)</u></a>	Up to \$1.5 million per year	Apply online	Collaborative medical research	January 27, 2026
<a href="#"><u>NIH: Maximizing Investigators Research Award (MIRA) for ESIs (R35)</u></a>	\$1.25 million over five years	Apply online	ESI medical research	February and October, annually
<a href="#"><u>NIH: NIAID Investigator Initiated Program Project Applications (P01)</u></a>	Roughly \$4 million per year for 3-5 years	Apply online	Large-scale multi-PI research relevant to NIAID	January and June, annually
<a href="#"><u>NIH: NIAID Parent R01</u></a>	\$500,000 per year for up to five years	Apply online	Broad variety of infectious disease topics related to microbiology	Standard tri-annual NIH dates through October 2027
<a href="#"><u>NSF: Cellular and Biochemical Engineering</u></a>	Typical awards are \$1.2 million over 3-4 years	Apply online	Cellular and biochemical engineering without a specific focus on human health applications	Rolling

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF PROSPECTS

FUNDER	RECOMMENDED REQUEST RANGE	APPROACH	FOCUS AREAS	DEADLINE
<a href="#"><u>NSF: Division of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Core Programs</u></a>	Roughly \$1 million per year for 3-4 years	Apply online	Molecular and cellular bioscience research without a specific focus on human health applications	Rolling
<a href="#"><u>NSF: Engineering of Biomedical Systems</u></a>	Roughly \$1 million over 3-4 years	Rolling	Research pertaining to both engineering and biomedical sciences	Rolling
<a href="#"><u>NSF: Environmental Engineering</u></a>	\$250,000 to \$850,000	Contact program officer	Water quality, management, and protection; soil science; pollution and waste; biogeochemistry	Rolling
<a href="#"><u>Allen Institute Frontiers Group</u></a>	Up to multi-million-dollar awards	Monitor RFPs	Microorganisms and climate change	Varies by RFP
<a href="#"><u>American Cancer Society</u></a>	Varies by track, typically \$100,000 or \$200,000 per year	Apply online	Cancer research, including microbiome-related approaches	April and October, annually (for most tracks)
<a href="#"><u>Beckman Young Investigator Program</u></a>	\$600,000 over four years	Await RFP	Early-career research support for chemical and life sciences PIs	August 1, 2025
<a href="#"><u>Burroughs Wellcome Fund: Investigators in the Pathogenesis of Infectious Disease Award</u></a>	\$500,000 over five years	Await RFP	Infectious disease research	July 18, 2025
<a href="#"><u>Chan Zuckerberg Initiative</u></a>	\$100,000 to \$1 million+	Contact staff, develop relationship	Genomics, cell science, and other precision health research	By invitation; some RFPs annually
<a href="#"><u>Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation: Rachleff Innovation Award</u></a>	\$200,000 per year for up to four years	Await RFP	Cancer research for early-career PIs, including microbiome topics	Projected July 2025

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF PROSPECTS

FUNDER	RECOMMENDED REQUEST RANGE	APPROACH	FOCUS AREAS	DEADLINE
<a href="#"><u>Gates Foundation</u></a>	\$100,000 to \$500,000 (occasionally higher)	Contact staff; await RFP	Medical research, infectious disease research, etc.	Varies by RFP
<a href="#"><u>Genentech</u></a>	Varies by RFP, up to \$150,000 per year for research	Varies by track	Disease research, biomarker research	Varies by RFP
<a href="#"><u>Gilead Research Scholars Program</u></a>	\$180,000 over two years	Varies by track	Medical research	Varies by RFP
<a href="#"><u>Infectious Diseases Society of America Foundation</u></a>	\$75,000 to \$100,000	Await RFP	Microbial pathogenesis in Alzheimer's disease	Projected early 2026
<a href="#"><u>Kenneth Rainin Foundation</u></a>	Up to \$150,000 per year for up to three years	Await RFP	IBD research	September 30, 2025 (LOI)
<a href="#"><u>Mallinckrodt Grants Program</u></a>	\$75,000 per year for up to three years	Await RFP; must be nominated	Basic and translational biomedical science research for early-career faculty	August 1, annually
<a href="#"><u>Mark Foundation for Cancer Research</u></a>	\$200,000 to \$750,000 over 2-3 years	Staff outreach	Cancer research	Occasional open RFPs; contact staff
<a href="#"><u>Mathers Foundation</u></a>	Up to \$300,000	Online LOI	Biology-related research	Rolling
<a href="#"><u>Merck KGaA Research Grants</u></a>	Roughly \$400,000 per year	Submit full online application	Health related research initiatives, including molecular biology, microphysiology, etc.	August 31, 2025
<a href="#"><u>Michelson Medical Research Foundation</u></a>	Roughly \$150,000	Await RFP	Disease-related research	June 22, 2025

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF PROSPECTS

FUNDER	RECOMMENDED REQUEST RANGE	APPROACH	FOCUS AREAS	DEADLINE
<a href="#"><u>Nature Awards: Global Grants for Gut Health</u></a>	\$100,000	Await RFP	Gut health research	Projected September 2025
<a href="#"><u>Pardee Foundation</u></a>	\$100,000 to \$250,000 over one year	Apply online	Cancer research	Roughly 2-3 deadlines per year
<a href="#"><u>Pew Biomedical Scholars</u></a>	Up to \$75,000 per year for four years (only \$12,500 for salary)	Must be nominated	Early-career biomedical research	Projected May 2026 (nomination)
<a href="#"><u>Pfizer: Investigator Sponsored Research</u></a>	Presumably roughly \$100,000 to \$300,000 (not stated by Pfizer)	Apply online	Has regularly supported immunology, virology research	Roughly 2-3 deadlines per year
<a href="#"><u>Rita Allen Foundation Scholars Award</u></a>	Up to \$110,000 per year for up to five years	Must be nominated	Early-career medical research, with a particular focus on cancer and immunology	Projected September 2025 (LOI)
<a href="#"><u>Schmidt Ocean Institute</u></a>	Not stated, appears to be roughly \$150,000	Apply online	Ocean-related microbiology research	June 30, 2025
<a href="#"><u>Searle Scholars Program</u></a>	\$100,000 per year for up to three years	Must be nominated	Early-career PIs in immunology, biochemistry, and related topics	Projected September 2025 (LOI)
<a href="#"><u>Simons Foundation</u></a>	\$100,000 to \$500,000	Apply online	Life sciences, microbial oceanography, medical research	Varies by track
<a href="#"><u>Sloan Foundation</u></a>	\$50,000 to \$400,000	Contact staff; apply online	Microbiology research, microbiomes in ocean science	Varies by program

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: OVERVIEW OF PROSPECTS

FUNDER	RECOMMENDED REQUEST RANGE	APPROACH	FOCUS AREAS	DEADLINE
<a href="#"><u>Water Research Foundation</u></a>	\$150,000 to \$300,000	Contact program officer	Biosurveillance in a water-research context	Varies by program and RFP
<a href="#"><u>Waterloo Foundation</u></a>	Up to \$87,000	Contact staff, apply online	Gut-microbiome research	Rolling
<a href="#"><u>W. M. Keck Foundation</u></a>	Up to \$2 million	Concept paper call; apply online	Breakthrough medical research using unconventional approaches	November 1, 2025

## CDMRP Peer Reviewed Medical Research Program

U.S. Department of Defense

This general/umbrella program covers a [wide variety of medical research topics](#), such as immunology, cancer, etc. Annual competitions have a variety of funding tracks; generally speaking, PRMRP supports original ideas that foster new directions along the entire spectrum of research and patient care, and seeks applications in laboratory, clinical, behavioral, epidemiological, and other areas of research to advance knowledge in disease etiology; improve prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, and quality of life.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** Pre-applications are due by June 9, 2025; the next deadline is projected for June 2026. queries, contact [help@eBRAP.org](mailto:help@eBRAP.org) or 301-682-5507
- AWARD SIZE** Up to \$2.5 million or \$8 million (varies by track) over project period.
- CONTACT** The general contact for CDMRP queries is [help@eBRAP.org](mailto:help@eBRAP.org).
- RESOURCES**
  - [Funder Website](#)

## USAMRDC BAA for Extramural Medical Research

U.S. Department of Defense

The USAMRDC's mission is to provide solutions to medical problems of importance to the American Service Member at home and abroad, as well as to the general public at large. This BAA is intended to solicit extramural research and development ideas aligned with USAMRDC's research and development programs, which vary widely. Its broad-ranging focus areas and large-scale grants indicate alignment with medical research generally: for example, the BAA funds research into antimicrobial-resistant bacteria.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** Proposals are accepted at any time.
- AWARD SIZE** Grant sizes are not stated for most tracks, but are typically in the multi-million-dollar range.
- CONTACT** The general contact for CDMRP queries is [help@eBRAP.org](mailto:help@eBRAP.org).
- RESOURCES**
  - [Program Website](#)

## Environmental System Science

Department of Energy

The ESS program aims to advance an integrated, robust, and scale-aware predictive understanding of terrestrial systems and their interdependent microbial, biogeochemical, ecological, hydrological, and physical processes. To support this goal, the program uses a systems approach to develop an integrative framework to elucidate the complex processes and controls on the structure, function, feedbacks, and dynamics of terrestrial systems, spanning from molecular to global scales and extending from the bedrock through the soil, rhizosphere, and vegetation to the atmosphere.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Projected early 2026, pending the upcoming Congressional budget
AWARD SIZE	Up to \$1 million
CONTACT	Brian Benscoter Email: <a href="mailto:Brian.Benscoter@science.doe.gov">Brian.Benscoter@science.doe.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Collaborative Grant for Multidisciplinary Teams (RM1)

National Institutes of Health

This program is designed to support highly integrated research teams of three to six Program Directors/Principal Investigators to address ambitious and challenging research questions that are within the mission of NIGMS, which includes many areas that should be of interest to the MSI. Project goals should not be achievable with a collection of individual efforts or projects. Collaborative program teams are expected to accomplish goals that require considerable synergy and managed team interactions. Teams are encouraged to consider far-reaching objectives that will produce major advances in their fields.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	January 27, 2026; may be renewed thereafter, pending the upcoming Congressional budget
AWARD SIZE	Up to \$1.5 million per year
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:RM1mailbox@nigms.nih.gov">RM1mailbox@nigms.nih.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Maximizing Investigators Research Award for ESIs (R35)

National Institutes of Health

This program provides support for a program of research in an ESI's laboratory that falls within the mission of NIGMS. The goal of MIRA is to increase the efficiency and efficacy of NIGMS funding. It is anticipated that MIRA will Enable investigators to apply earlier in their independent research careers, allowing them to secure grant funding that will launch and sustain productive research careers; and enhance investigators' ability to move into research areas that are distinct from those of their postdoctoral mentors by not requiring or expecting preliminary data, which could lead to new scientific discoveries. Notably, there is also a non-ESI track for MIRA.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	February and October, annually
AWARD SIZE	\$250,000 per year for five years
CONTACT	Michelle R. Bond Email: <a href="mailto:nigms-esimira@nigms.nih.gov">nigms-esimira@nigms.nih.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## NIAID Investigator Initiated Program (P01)

National Institutes of Health

The proposed programs should address scientific areas relevant to the NIAID mission, including many topics that are relevant for the MSI. The P01 is similar to a multi-R01 award; each P01 application submitted to this FOA must include at least two related, synergistic research projects that share a common central theme, focus, and/or overall objective; and an administrative core. A P01 may include scientific cores, if needed for the proposed research.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	January and June annually, final deadline is June 11, 2025; should be renewed in mid-2025, pending the upcoming Congressional budget
AWARD SIZE	<a href="#">Past awards</a> indicate roughly \$4 million per year across all funded projects, usually for 2-3 PIs.
CONTACT	Martin Gutierrez Telephone: (240) 292-4844 Email: <a href="mailto:mgutierrez@niaid.nih.gov">mgutierrez@niaid.nih.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## NIAID Parent R01

National Institutes of Health

The NIH Research Project Grant supports a discrete, specified, circumscribed project in areas representing the specific interests and competencies of the investigator(s). The proposed project must be related to the programmatic interests of one or more of the participating NIH Institutes and Centers based on their scientific missions: the clearest fit for the MSI, as with the P01 mechanism profiled above, is almost certainly NIAID (or its successor IC within any reorganization of the NIH's structure).



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Tri-annual NIH deadlines apply
AWARD SIZE	Grants are up to \$500,000 per year for up to five years, with a straightforward renewal process.
CONTACT	Contact information varies by IC.
RESOURCES	• <a href="#">Program Website</a>

## Cellular and Biochemical Engineering

National Science Foundation

The program encourages highly innovative and potentially transformative engineering research leading to novel bioprocessing and biomanufacturing approaches. Fundamental to many CBE research projects is the understanding of how biomolecules, subcellular systems, cells, and cell populations interact, and how those interactions lead to changes in structure, function, and behavior. A quantitative treatment of problems related to biological processes is considered vital to successful research projects in the CBE program. Major areas of interest for the program include metabolic engineering and synthetic biology for biomanufacturing; the design of synthetic metabolic components and synthetic cells; and microbiome structure, function, maintenance, and design.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Rolling
AWARD SIZE	Typically \$1.2 million over 3-4 years
CONTACT	Steven W. Peretti Telephone: (703) 292-4201 Email: <a href="mailto:speretti@nsf.gov">speretti@nsf.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Div. of Molecular and Cellular Biosciences Core Programs

National Science Foundation

The program gives high priority to projects that advance mechanistic understanding of the structure, function, and evolution of molecular, subcellular, and cellular systems. MCB encourages research exploring new concepts in molecular and cellular biology, while incorporating insights and approaches from other scientific disciplines, such as chemistry, computer science, engineering, etc. Regarding health-related challenges, NSF supports basic research in all areas of the biological sciences and recognizes that this foundational research is likely to impact many different areas, including human health.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Rolling
AWARD SIZE	Typical awards are roughly \$1 million per year for 3-4 years
CONTACT	Loretta Jackson-Hayes Telephone: (703) 292-4286 Email: <a href="mailto:mcb-cdf@nsf.gov">mcb-cdf@nsf.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Engineering of Biomedical Systems

National Science Foundation

This program aims to provide opportunities for fundamental and transformative research projects that integrate engineering and life sciences to solve biomedical problems and serve humanity in the long term. Projects are expected to use an engineering framework (for example, design or modeling) that supports increased understanding of physiological or pathophysiological processes. Projects must include objectives that advance both engineering and biomedical sciences, and can include new approaches to the design of systems that include both living and non-living components for eventual medical use in the long term. Various focus areas appear to be relevant for the MSI, including immunology.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Rolling
AWARD SIZE	Roughly \$1 million over 3-4 years
CONTACT	Rizia Bardhan Telephone: (703) 292-2390 Email: <a href="mailto:ebms@nsf.gov">ebms@nsf.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Environmental Engineering

National Science Foundation

This program supports research related to mitigating the ecological and human-health impacts of pollution and waste. Research priorities include protection, management, and sustainability of water; environmental chemistry, fate, and transport of nutrients and contaminants in the environment, including in soil; reduction and prevention of pollution and waste; and engineering of the built environment to enhance and improve the health of humans and the environment. Projects should include a significant focus on the biogeochemical reactivity of pollutants and waste in the environment.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Rolling
AWARD SIZE	Awards generally range from \$250,000 to \$850,000.
CONTACT	Karl J. Rockne Telephone: (703) 292-7293 Email: <a href="mailto:krockne@nsf.gov">krockne@nsf.gov</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Program Website</a>

## Allen Institute Frontiers Group

The Frontiers Group enables cutting-edge bioscience around the world. RFPs are targeted to high-risk, high-impact opportunities and seek innovative, ambitious project ideas that: open a new field of research; upend current scientific dogma; change our fundamental understanding of an aspect of biology; are catalytic for a research community; and are unlikely to be supported by traditional funders or by industry. Focus areas appear to be relevant: for example, a recently closed RFP sought to address significant knowledge gaps in our understanding of the molecular drivers and dynamics of microorganism resilience to climate change.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	<a href="#">Monitor RFPs</a> , which are offered at various points in the year
AWARD SIZE	Award sizes range widely, from \$200,000 to multi-million-dollar grants.
CONTACT	<a href="#">Online contact form</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society awards research grants into seven broad areas of scientific interest: Biology; Etiology (causes of cancer); Prevention; Early Detection, Diagnosis, and Prognosis; Treatment; Cancer Control, Survivorship, and Outcomes Research; and Scientific Model Systems. In terms of funding tracks, ACS awards dozens of different types of grants each year, some of which appear to be relevant for microbiome-related research.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies by track; typically April and October
AWARD SIZE	Varies by track; e.g., for DBG awards, grants are up to \$297,000 over two years.
CONTACT	Telephone: (404) 329-7558 Email: <a href="mailto:grants@cancer.org">grants@cancer.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Beckman Young Investigator Program

The BYI Program provides research support to promising young faculty members in the early stages of academic careers in the chemical and life sciences particularly to foster the invention of methods, instruments and materials that will open up new avenues of research in science. Notably, eligibility is restricted to faculty within the first four years of a tenure-track position, or an equivalent independent research appointment; PIs can have no more than \$225,000 in direct, annualized external funding grants during any BYI Program Year (Aug-July) at time of application.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	August 1, 2025 (LOI)
AWARD SIZE	\$600,000 over four years
CONTACT	Nicole Patras Telephone: (949) 560-4329 Email: <a href="mailto:byi@beckman-foundation.org">byi@beckman-foundation.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Burroughs Wellcome Fund: Investigators in the Pathogenesis of Infectious Disease Award

This program provides opportunities for assistant professors to bring multidisciplinary approaches to studying human infectious diseases. The program aims to provide accomplished investigators at the assistant professor level with opportunities to study what happens at the points where the systems of humans and potentially infectious agents connect. The program supports research that sheds light on the fundamentals that affect the outcomes of these encounters: how colonization, infection, commensalism, and other relationships play out at levels ranging from molecular interactions to systemic ones.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	July 18, 2025 (LOI)
AWARD SIZE	\$500,000 over five years
CONTACT	Victoria McGovern Telephone: (919) 991-5112 Email: <a href="mailto:vmcgovern@bwfund.org">vmcgovern@bwfund.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative was founded in 2015 to help solve some of society's toughest challenges: from eradicating disease and improving education, to addressing the needs of our local communities. The foundation has a strong interest technology with applications in the biomedical sciences. In the recent years, the Foundation has also made heavy investments into genomics and precision health. The foundation is also interested in cell sciences, metabolic disorders, and related topics, and offers a [variety of RFPs](#).



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Some RFPs are offered; PIs may also contact staff directly
AWARD SIZE	Typical relevant grants are roughly \$100,000 to \$1 million and upwards.
CONTACT	<a href="#">Contact Form</a> (scroll to bottom of page)
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a> ▪ <a href="#">List of Current RFPs</a>

## Damon Runyon Cancer Research Foundation: Rachleff Innovation Award

This program aims to support the next generation of exceptionally creative thinkers with “high-risk/high-reward” ideas that have the potential to significantly impact our understanding of and/or approaches to the prevention, diagnosis or treatment of cancer but lack sufficient preliminary data to obtain traditional funding. Applicants are expected to commit a minimum of 80% of their time to conducting research. Applicants must be in the first five years of the tenure track. Other Runyon grants may also be of interest.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Projected July 2025
AWARD SIZE	\$200,000 per year for up to four years
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:awards@damonrunyon.org">awards@damonrunyon.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Gates Foundation

The Gates Foundation works to fight poverty, disease, and inequity around the world. Program strategies include: Gender Equality, Global Development, Global Growth and Opportunity, Global Health, Global Policy and Advocacy. Funded topics include public health, communicable disease control, climate change, international development, medical specialties/research, university education, nutrition, pediatrics, and biomedicine. The Foundation awards most of its grants to organizations that have been preselected to apply for funding, although it occasionally issues open RFPs.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Deadlines vary by program and RFP
AWARD SIZE	Typical grants range from \$100,000 to \$500,000
CONTACT	Telephone: (206) 709-3100 Email: <a href="mailto:info@gatesfoundation.org">info@gatesfoundation.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Foundation Website</a> ▪ <a href="#">Contact Page</a>

## Genentech

This group invests in bold ideas and innovative solutions that address systemic inequities in science and medicine to advance a more just healthcare system. Genentech supports a wide-variety of health-related projects, from medical education support to specific disease and biomarker research. Regular Requests for Proposals (RFPs) occur throughout the year. Sign up for the RFP portal [here](#).



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies
AWARD SIZE	Varies by RFP, up to \$150,000 per year for research
CONTACT	Contact: <a href="#">Online form</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Gilead Research Scholars Program

Since its launch in 2008, the Research Scholars Program has supported meaningful research by high-caliber emerging investigators to help transform scientific understanding, address knowledge gaps and drive medical breakthroughs in the following therapeutic areas: The Research Scholars Program awards provide two years of financial support to junior faculty researchers. Each award is funded depending on country and region, paid as two annual installments directly to the scholar's institution. Funding for the second year is contingent upon submission of a progress report and approval by the chair of the program's scientific review committee. Current topics include oncology and virology.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies by track (e.g., <a href="#">HIV deadline in July 2025</a> )
AWARD SIZE	Usually \$180,000 over two years
CONTACT	Contact varies by RFP
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Infectious Diseases Society of America Foundation

For the past two years, IDSA has supported research for Microbial Pathogenesis in Alzheimer's Disease, where grants provide funding to identify a potential microbial link to Alzheimer's disease. All awards must be narrowly focused on elucidating the possible roles of infectious agents in the causation of Alzheimer's disease; grants will support innovative research including basic, clinical and/or non-traditional approaches. This includes proposals that span the breadth of the microbial world, including bacteria, fungi, parasites, viruses and microbial synergy, among other possibilities.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Projected early 2026
AWARD SIZE	\$75,000 to \$100,000
CONTACT	Amy Shapley-Farrell Email: <a href="mailto:ashapley@idsociety.org">ashapley@idsociety.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Kenneth Rainin Foundation

The Foundation provides early support for innovative ideas that can lead to improvements in preventing, predicting, diagnosing and treating Inflammatory Bowel Disease. The goal is to enable researchers worldwide to test ideas, gather and share data, and collaborate to advance the understanding of IBD. Rainin's Innovator Awards support individual research projects with grants of up to \$150,000 and collaborative projects involving multiple investigators with grants of up to \$300,000. Grantees who demonstrate significant progress are eligible for up to two years of additional support.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	September 30, 2025 (LOI)
AWARD SIZE	\$150,000 per year for up to three years
CONTACT	Telephone: (510) 625-5200 <a href="#">Online contact form</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Mallinckrodt Grants Program

This program supports early-stage biomedical investigators engaged in basic and translational research that has the potential to make fundamental advances in biomedical science. Provides faculty members in the first to fourth year of a tenure-track position with support to move the project forward to the point where R01 or other independent funding can be obtained. Applicants should be in the first to fourth year of their tenure-track faculty position and not have current R01 funding. PIs must be nominated by Harvard; only one candidate may be put forward.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	August 1, annually
AWARD SIZE	\$75,000 per year for up to three years
CONTACT	Becki Blankenship Email: <a href="mailto:emjf.org@gmail.com">emjf.org@gmail.com</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Mark Foundation for Cancer Research

The Mark Foundation for Cancer Research ASPIRE Awards (Accelerating Scientific Platforms and Innovative Research) support innovative ideas that have the potential to solve high-impact problems in cancer research, but may not have extensive (or any) preliminary supporting data. ASPIRE Awards enable high-risk, high-reward projects to answer key feasibility and proof-of-concept questions and arrive at critical project inflection points in an accelerated time frame. [Other tracks](#) may also be worth considering.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Direct outreach is required
AWARD SIZE	ASPIRE awards range from \$250,000 to \$750,000 over 2-3 years.
CONTACT	Telephone: (646) 866-5950 Email: <a href="mailto:info@themarkfoundation.org">info@themarkfoundation.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Mathers Foundation

The mission of the Mathers Foundation is to advance knowledge in the life sciences by sponsoring scientific research that will benefit mankind. Basic scientific research, with potential translational application, is central to this goal, and fundamental to our operating principles. Immunology, microbiome, genomics, structural biology, cellular physiology, neuroscience, etc., are some noteworthy examples of current research support. Notably, Mathers does not have a strong focus on applied or medical research as such, and any proposal should be pitched as basic biology (insofar as this is possible).



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Rolling (online LOI)
AWARD SIZE	Roughly \$100,000 to \$300,000
CONTACT	Telephone: (914) 242-0465 Email: admin@mathersfoundation.org
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a></li><li>▪ <a href="#">LOI Portal</a></li></ul>

## Merck KGaA Research Grants

Merck KGaA, sometimes known as Millipore Sigma in the United States, has a focus on research and innovations that improve the quality of life of people everywhere, from healthcare to electronics. Since 2018, they have offered a series of research grants to stimulate innovative research in challenging areas of future importance. Regular Requests for Proposals (RFPs) occur throughout the year. Previous topics of interest include AI for diagnostics and target discovery, Healthy lives/drug discovery, and Life reimagined/synthetic biology. Current topics are (1) Smart Consumables for Digital Integration in Biomanufacturing Processes and (2) Multi-Purpose Microphysiological Systems.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	August 31, 2025
AWARD SIZE	Average of \$400,000 per year
CONTACT	Merck KGaA Research Grants Email: <a href="mailto:researchgrants@emdgroup.com">researchgrants@emdgroup.com</a>
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a></li><li>▪ <a href="#">Guidelines</a></li></ul>

## Michelson Medical Research Foundation

Michelson's Next Generation Grants are given annually to support promising researchers applying disruptive concepts and inventive processes to advance human immunology, vaccine discovery, and immunotherapy research for major global diseases. This funder is aiming to support research aimed at tackling the current roadblocks that exist in human vaccine development and expanding our limited understanding of key immune processes that are fundamental to successful vaccine and immunotherapy development. While the Michelson Prizes are focused on research in the fields of immunology, vaccine, and immunotherapy discovery, applicants from the full spectrum of related disciplines, including clinical research, biochemistry, molecular biology, protein engineering, computer science, etc., are encouraged to apply. Researchers 35 years of age and under are eligible to apply.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	June 22, 2025; projected Summer 2026
AWARD SIZE	\$150,000 / one-year grants to support research
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:michelsonprizes@nextfrontieradvisors.com">michelsonprizes@nextfrontieradvisors.com</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Nature Awards: Global Grants for Gut Health

The Global Grants for Gut Health is a competitive program for investigator-initiated research into the human gut microbiota, supported by Yakult and Nature Portfolio. The program supports proposals for one-year research projects, whether laboratory investigations or clinical studies, that advance understanding of the mechanisms by which gut microbiota have an impact on human health.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	The next call for applications opens in June 2025; a deadline of September 2025 is expected.
AWARD SIZE	Up to \$100,000
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:gutgrants@springernature.com">gutgrants@springernature.com</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a> ▪ <a href="#">Guidelines</a>

## Pardee Foundation

The Elsa U. Pardee Foundation funds research to investigators proposing research directed toward identifying new treatments or cures for cancer. The Foundation funds projects for a one-year period which will allow the establishment of capabilities of new cancer researchers or new cancer approaches by established cancer researchers. It is anticipated that this early-stage funding by the Foundation may lead to subsequent and expanded support using government agency funding.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** Proposals are typically due 2-3 times per year.
- AWARD SIZE** Typically \$100,000 to \$300,000
- CONTACT** Telephone: (989) 832-3691  
[Online contact form](#)
- RESOURCES**
- [Funder Website](#)
  - [Guidelines](#)

## Pew Biomedical Scholars

This program supports early-career biomedical research. Based on their performance during their education and training, candidates for this award should demonstrate outstanding promise as contributors in science relevant to human health. This program does not fund clinical trials research; in addition, strong proposals will incorporate particularly creative and pioneering approaches to basic, translational, and applied biomedical research. Candidates whose work is based on biomedical principles but who bring in concepts and theories from more diverse fields are encouraged to apply. PIs must be nominated by their institution.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** The next deadline for nominations is projected for May 2026.
- AWARD SIZE** \$75,000 per year for up to four years; notably, only \$12,500 per year is allotted for salary.
- CONTACT** Email: [scholarsapp@pewtrusts.org](mailto:scholarsapp@pewtrusts.org)
- RESOURCES**
- [Funder Website](#)

## Pfizer Investigator Sponsored Research

Pfizer supports general research projects focused on the development or refinement of specific and defined medical knowledge unrelated to a Pfizer asset (as well as a separate track for research related to Pfizer assets). This includes observational studies, such as epidemiology studies and certain outcomes research studies where the primary focus is the scientific understanding of disease as well as other types of independent research on disease states. Topic areas include oncology, antivirals, immunology, anti-infectives, etc.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** Proposals are typically due 2-3 times per year.
- AWARD SIZE** Not stated, likely \$100,000 to \$300,000
- CONTACT** Email: [GlobalMedicalGrants@pfizer.com](mailto:GlobalMedicalGrants@pfizer.com)
- RESOURCES**
- [Funder Website](#)
  - [Guidelines](#)

## Rita Allen Foundation Scholars Award

This program supports basic biomedical research in the fields of cancer, immunology, and neuroscience. The program embraces innovative research with above-average risk and groundbreaking possibilities. Candidates should be in the first three years of their tenure, and must have committed start up funds and lab space from the applicant institution. Notably, PIs must be nominated, and Harvard can only put forward one candidate per year.



### FAST FACTS

- DEADLINE** Projected September 2025 (LOI)
- AWARD SIZE** Up to \$110,000 per year for up to five years
- CONTACT** Telephone: (609) 683-8010  
Email: [info@ritaallen.org](mailto:info@ritaallen.org)
- RESOURCES**
- [Funder Website](#)

## Schmidt Ocean Institute

Schmidt Ocean Institute seeks Expressions of Interest (EOI) for collaborative, multidisciplinary research at any time and for any location and year identified as an area of operation for its research vessel. EOIs and full proposals are accepted on a rolling basis and are reviewed twice per year. Investigators may request a full berthing allotment for science in an EOI or may be partnered with additional projects at the full proposal stage to maximize the use of the vessel. While Schmidt offers a variety of topics, the Frontiers of Biodiversity focus area includes discovery and preservation of life, extreme environments, deep sea biodiversity, and microbiology.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	June 30, 2025
AWARD SIZE	Not stated by Schmidt, but appears to be roughly \$100,000 to \$200,000
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:proposals@schmidtocean.org">proposals@schmidtocean.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Searle Scholars Program

This program supports the research of outstanding individuals who have recently begun their appointment at the assistant professor level and are pursuing independent research careers in biochemistry, cell biology, genetics, immunology, neuroscience, pharmacology, and related areas in chemistry, medicine, and the biological sciences. The program does not ordinarily support purely clinical research but has supported research programs that include both clinical and basic components. PIs must be nominated by their institution; Harvard may only put forward three candidates per year.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Projected September 2025 (LOI)
AWARD SIZE	\$100,000 per year for three years
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:searlescholars@kinshipfoundation.org">searlescholars@kinshipfoundation.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Simons Foundation

The Simons Foundation division of Life Sciences seeks to advance basic research on fundamental questions in biology. The division currently focuses on microbial oceanography and computational biogeochemical modeling of marine ecosystems, microbial ecology and evolution, and support of early-career scientists. Simons also funds research pertaining to neuroscience and autism research. Past grants have supported microbial ecology, collaborative neurodevelopment research, etc.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies by track
AWARD SIZE	Varies by track, usually between \$50,000 and \$500,000
CONTACT	Telephone: (646) 654-0066 Email: <a href="mailto:info@simonsfoundation.org">info@simonsfoundation.org</a>
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a></li><li>▪ <a href="#">Program List</a></li></ul>

## Sloan Foundation

The Foundation seeks proposals for original projects led by outstanding individuals or teams, which exhibit a high degree of methodological rigor, which have a high expected return to society, and for which funding from the private sector, government, or other foundations is not yet widely available. Sloan has funded a broad variety of topics that should be relevant to the MSI, including the [microbiology of the built environment](#), microbiomes in ocean science, etc., through a [variety of programs](#). Sloan also offers a [fellowship program](#) for early-career scientists; applicants must be tenure-track, though untenured, as of September 15 of the nomination year.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies by program
AWARD SIZE	Grants vary based on project scope, but usually range between \$50,000 and \$400,000
CONTACT	Telephone: (212) 649-1649 Email: <a href="mailto:frontdesk@sloan.org">frontdesk@sloan.org</a>
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a></li></ul>

## Water Research Foundation

WRF supports research on the science of water, including the technology, operation, and management of drinking water, wastewater, water reuse, and stormwater systems, with the ultimate goal of ensuring water quality and improving water services. WRF has three main research grant programs: the Research Priority Program, which receives 60 percent of WRF's research budget and posts multiple topical RFPs each year; the Unsolicited Research Program, which accepts proposals for field-initiated projects and receives 10 percent of WRF's annual research budget; and the Tailored Collaboration Program, which accepts proposals for utility- or region-specific issues sponsored by WRF subscriber utility providers. The most notable funding area appears to be biosurveillance.



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	Varies by program and RFP
AWARD SIZE	Parameters vary by program, with awards generally ranging from \$150,000 to \$300,000
CONTACT	Telephone: (303) 347-6100 Email: <a href="mailto:info@waterrf.org">info@waterrf.org</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a>

## Waterloo Foundation

The Waterloo Foundation's Child Development Fund supports research pertaining to the psychological and behavioral development of children, where its goal is to understand why and how brains develop differently and what we can do to help children and families thrive. One of the Fund's new focus areas is [Nutrition and the Microbiome: Getting Evidence into Practice](#), which seeks research supporting further exploration on the neurodevelopment of children in the context of nutrition and the gut microbiome. While the Foundation is based in the U.K., it specifically highlights its support for U.S.-based PIs, and has supported PIs at domestic IHEs in recent years,



### FAST FACTS

DEADLINE	After contacting staff, email the application (see <a href="#">guidelines here</a> ) to <a href="mailto:applications@waterloofoundation.org.uk">applications@waterloofoundation.org.uk</a> as an attachment.
AWARD SIZE	Up to £65,000 per project, or approximately \$87,000.
CONTACT	Email: <a href="mailto:info@waterloofoundation.org.uk">info@waterloofoundation.org.uk</a>
RESOURCES	▪ <a href="#">Funder Website</a> ▪ <a href="#">Guidelines</a>

## W. M. Keck Foundation

Through its Science & Engineering Research Program and Medical Research Program, W. M. Keck Foundation funds breakthrough engineering and medical research projects, with a focus on novel and unconventional approaches. Examples of previous projects include solutions for “undruggable” proteins and gene therapy for drug addiction. Proposed research projects should focus on important and emerging areas of research; have potential to develop breakthrough technologies, instrumentation, or methodologies; be innovative, distinctive, and interdisciplinary; and demonstrate a high level of risk due to unconventional approaches or challenge the prevailing paradigm. Notably, before submitting a proposal, organizations must email to schedule concept counseling calls and attach preliminary documentation for the project. This funder is highly competitive.



### FAST FACTS

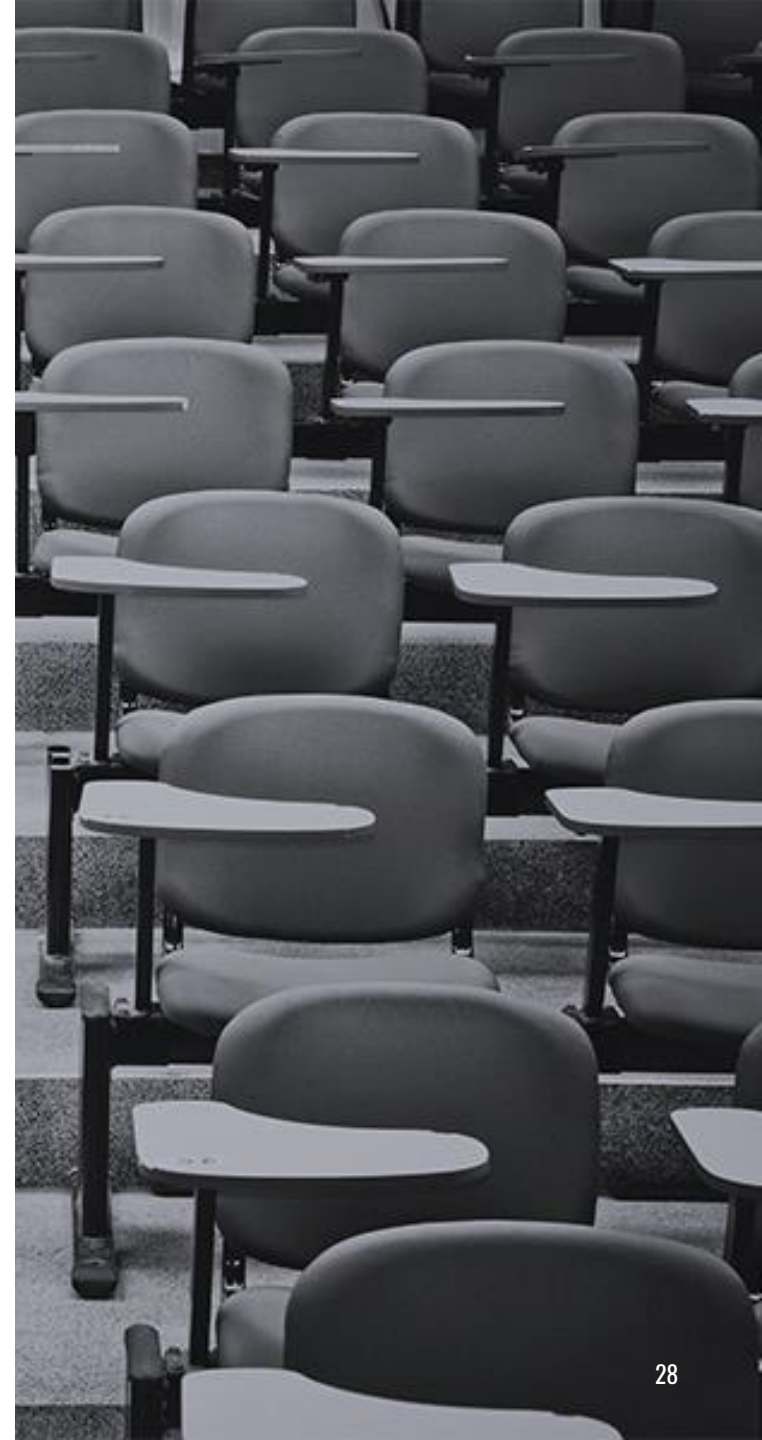
- DEADLINE** November 1, 2025 (for proposals); a preliminary concept paper counseling session is recommended.
- AWARD SIZE** Up to \$2 million
- CONTACT** Telephone: (213) 612-2000  
Email: [concepts@wmkeck.org](mailto:concepts@wmkeck.org)
- RESOURCES**
  - [Funder Website](#)

## METHODOLOGY

Hanover's prospecting reports use third-party search engines, Grants.gov, Foundation Center (Candid), funder websites, and other resources in order to determine appropriate funding prospects for our clients. Accordingly, our prospecting reports often contain language taken directly from the websites and published guidelines of grantmaking agencies and foundations. This language is often presented verbatim along with Hanover's analysis in order to provide as accurate a presentation of funder priorities and requirements as possible. Source materials are hyperlinked throughout the document.

## CAVEAT

The publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this brief. The publisher and authors make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this brief and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties that extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. No warranty may be created or extended by representatives of Hanover Research or its marketing materials. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every client. Neither the publisher nor the authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Moreover, Hanover Research is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Clients requiring such services are advised to consult an appropriate professional.






## CONTACT

**CHRIS GRAY**

Senior Content Director

**E:** [cgray@hanoverresearch.com](mailto:cgray@hanoverresearch.com)

**P:** (202) 350-4797

 [hanoverresearch.com](http://hanoverresearch.com)