



Ono Pharma Foundation

Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program

Frequently Asked Questions

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Ono Initiative Awards Program

1. What is the goal of the Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program?

The Ono Initiative supports creative research conducted by emerging Chemical Biologists in search of new discoveries, solutions, and the development of high-impact science. To this end, the Foundation prioritizes funding rigorous, comprehensible, mechanistic chemical biology.

The goals of the Ono Initiative are to:

- Identify and develop innovative research proposals and results that could lead to the development of breakthrough treatment solutions for patients.
- Support academic research and the career development of promising young and established scientists.
- Build strong relationships within the community in order to lead to transformative research aligned with Ono Initiative's interest.

2. What is the length of this Award?

All grants awarded by Ono Pharma Foundation have a three-year term.

3. What is the funding level of these Awards?

Awards will consist of annual funding of \$300,000/year, totaling a maximum of \$900,000 for the normal term of a research project. The Ono Pharma Foundation will provide up to an additional 15% (\$45,000) per year to be used for indirect costs of the PI's institution. In total, Ono Pharma Foundation's three-year research awards provide up to \$1,035,000 to researchers and their institutions.

Eligibility & Nomination

1. Who is eligible?

Applicants must meet the following requirements. Letter of Interest (LOI) and final Proposals from applicants not meeting the requirements listed below will not be considered.

- PIs applying must be working at one of the nominating institutions. Nominating institutions might be replaced or added in subsequent years.
- The PI must have an MD and/or a PhD degree.
- The PI must be a new applicant to the Ono Initiative, or, if they are a returning applicant, must be applying for a project different from the one they previously proposed.
- The PI must be a young and/or mid-career scientist (15 years or less of experience since their starting independent academic position).
- The PI must not have been, nor currently be, engaged in other sponsored research and/or collaborative research with Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. and/or grant program with Ono Pharma Foundation.
- The PI may not apply for funding to amplify current work. However, PIs may research a new idea based on a prior finding of the PI.

- The PI must not be a healthcare professional defined as individuals currently holding an active state license for which they are (a) qualified to prescribe, administer, use or supply any medicinal or medical products or (b) perform any professional clinical services. A PI with an MD but without an active state medical license is still eligible.
- PIs serving on a healthcare formulary or similar committee are not eligible.
- More details on eligibility criteria can be found in the *“Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program: Program Information & Overview”* document.

2. Is the PI eligible if they have previously applied?

The PI must be a new applicant to the Ono Initiative, or, if they are returning, be proposing a project different from the one they initially submitted. If a PI submits the same project, the PI will be contacted and asked to apply with a different project, assuming the application deadline has not already passed. Competitive candidates typically propose a single project with a new research question or method that is not already funded.

3. Is the PI eligible if their experience is over 15 years when awarded?

Eligibility is determined based on the LOI date of submission. PI's who have 15 or fewer years since starting in an academic position are eligible. PI's with more than 15 years of experience since starting in an academic position at the date of LOI submission are ineligible.

4. What leaves factor into the 15-year requirement for eligibility?

Only parental leave will be considered when calculating eligibility as “mid-career” scientist.

5. Which are the Nominating Institutions?

Please see the next page.

2026 Applicant Nominating Institutions in Chemical Biology Research *

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Albert Einstein College of Medicine | 36. The University of Texas – Austin |
| 2. Baylor College of Medicine | 37. The University of Texas – Southwestern Medical Center |
| 3. Boston College | 38. The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center |
| 4. California Institute of Technology | 39. The University of Utah |
| 5. Carnegie Mellon University | 40. University of Alberta |
| 6. Columbia University | 41. University of British Columbia |
| 7. Cornell University | 42. University of California – Berkeley |
| 8. Duke University | 43. University of California – Davis |
| 9. Emory University | 44. University of California – Irvine |
| 10. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Institute | 45. University of California – Los Angeles |
| 11. Georgia Institute of Technology | 46. University of California – San Diego |
| 12. Harvard Medical School | 47. University of California – San Francisco |
| 13. Harvard University | 48. University of California – Santa Barbara |
| 14. Johns Hopkins University | 49. University of California – Santa Cruz |
| 15. Massachusetts Institute of Technology | 50. University of Colorado Anschutz |
| 16. McGill University | 51. University of Florida |
| 17. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center | 52. University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign |
| 18. Michigan State University | 53. University of Massachusetts – Amherst |
| 19. Northeastern University | 54. University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School |
| 20. Northwestern University | 55. University of Michigan |
| 21. Ohio State University | 56. University of Minnesota |
| 22. Oregon Health and Science University | 57. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill |
| 23. Princeton University | 58. University of Notre Dame |
| 24. Purdue University | 59. University of Pittsburgh |
| 25. Rice University | 60. University of Southern California |
| 26. Salk Institute for Biological Studies | 61. University of Toronto |
| 27. Stanford University | 62. University of Virginia |
| 28. Texas A&M University | 63. University of Washington |
| 29. The Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT | 64. University of Wisconsin – Madison |
| 30. The Ohio State University | 65. Vanderbilt University |
| 31. The Pennsylvania State University | 66. Washington University in St. Louis |
| 32. The Rockefeller University | 67. Yale University |
| 33. The Scripps Research Institute | |
| 34. The University of Arizona | |
| 35. The University of Chicago | |

**Each Nominating Institution may nominate up to two (2) applicants in Chemical Biology Research.*

6. How may an Institution be added to the nominating list?

If an Institution is interested in becoming a nomination, they should email ono@tccgrp.com. No submission materials are needed to be considered. At the end of each Initiative cycle, the Ono Initiative Scientific Advisory Board meets to determine the list of Institutions to invite.

7. What are the research requirements?

In 2026 the Ono Pharma Foundation will only consider proposals for scientific research projects addressing the following field of science:

- Chemical Biology
 - Chemical Biology includes all scientific disciplines that aim to understand and control cellular and human biology at the chemical level. The Ono Initiative places a strong emphasis on original research projects showing innovation, and therefore, the criteria for this field are intentionally broad to ensure that potentially innovative and groundbreaking projects are not excluded. We prioritize rigorous, comprehensible, mechanistic chemical biology. We welcome proposals from both basic and applied sciences..
- Complete the two-step application process which is: (i) submission of a Letter of Interest, and (ii) if selected, submission of a full Proposal within the time designated by the Ono Pharma Foundation.

8. Why does Ono Pharma Foundation focus on Chemical Biology?

Chemical biology is vital to the transformation of human health. Through studying biological systems at the chemical level, chemical biology helps answer biological questions and elucidate mechanisms of disorder, leading to the discovery and development of treatments for diseases. We do not limit the definition of chemical biology to the application of small molecules. Instead, we encourage applicants to leverage high-impact and transformative research and are flexible in our review of applications. **We prioritize rigorous, comprehensible, mechanistic chemical biology.** We welcome proposals from both basic and applied sciences.

Application Process

1. What are the Selection Criteria?

Applications will be assessed, and Awards will be made based upon the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of the research LOI and/or Proposal
- Relevance of proposed research to the mission of the Ono Initiative
 - Significance
 - Innovation
 - Approach
- Technical considerations for the research
- Qualifications and relevant experience of the PI
- Evidence of a suitable research environment

2. What is the application process?

The application processes for the scientific research is:

- **LOI in Chemical Biology Research:** PIs should first contact the administration office of their Institution. Institutions will be asked to nominate PIs, but only the PI may submit LOIs and Proposals.
- An LOI should be submitted through the Ono Pharma Foundation online portal. To access the website, please click on the link below to the application portal, select “REGISTER,” and follow the online instructions.
 - If this is your first time visiting the portal, you will be sent your login information within 24 hours of submitting your “Registration.”
 - If this is not your first time visiting the portal, you will still need to register to be assigned an LOI form for the current program year, but your username and password remain the same as when you previously applied.
- Proposal submission by LOI applicants and selected by a Scientific Advisory Board will be invited by the Ono Pharma Foundation to submit a full Proposal. The Proposal must be submitted through the Ono Pharma Foundation Portal. Please access the Application Portal on the Ono Pharma Foundation website.
- More detail as to the application process can be found in the “*Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program: Program Information & Overview*” document.

Please see below for links to the Ono Pharma Foundation website and application portal:

- Website: www.onofound.org
- Application Portal: <https://ono.fluxx.io>

3. How will I know if I am invited to submit a full Proposal?

The Ono Pharma Foundation will make announcements about LOI selections and send Requests for Proposals (“RFP”) to selected PI/Applicants in April 2026. RFPs will be made based on:

- Eligibility of Applicant
- Completion of Research Requirements
- Strength of proposed project against Selection Criteria

4. What is the timetable?

Please see the next page.

Step	Timeline	Responsible Party
Funding Opportunity Program Announcement	November 18, 2025	Ono Pharma Foundation
LOI submission open	November 18, 2025	Ono Pharma Foundation
LOI submission due date	February 13, 2026, 5 pm ET*	PI/Institution
RFPs sent out	April, 2026	Ono Pharma Foundation
Proposal due date	May 15, 2026	PI
Announcement of the Awards	July 2026	Ono Pharma Foundation
Project Start	August - October, 2026	PI

**Addenda, supplemental materials, changes, or updates will not be accepted after the deadline for submitting either the LOI or the Proposal.*

Awardees

1. How many Awards are given?

Three Awards are planned every year, contingent upon Ono Pharma Foundation appropriations and the submission of sufficient meritorious applications.

2. Who will make the decisions about the Awardees?

The Ono Pharma Foundation selects all Awardees based upon recommendations of its Scientific Advisory Board ("SAB"), which is comprised of outside experts from the fields of Chemical Biology.

3. Who selects the Scientific Advisory Board?

The members of the SAB are selected by the Ono Pharma Foundation based upon their expertise and reputation in the field of Chemical Biology.

Ono Pharma Foundation

1. What is Ono Pharma Foundation's policy regarding intellectual property?

The parties intend and agree that, to the extent allowable by U.S. intellectual property law, all intellectual property rights related to activities and research funded by the Grant shall be exclusively owned by the PI's Institution. The Foundation disclaims any intellectual property and related rights developed by the research activities supported by the grant.

2. Who is Ono Pharmaceutical CO.,LTD.?

Ono Pharmaceutical Co.,Ltd. is a leading global healthcare company committed to delivering new, innovative drugs to patients, and championing the fight against disease and pain, together with research, patients, their families, and healthcare providers. Ono Pharmaceutical Co.,Ltd. of Osaka, Japan is a fully integrated, research based pharmaceutical company which traces its origins back over 300 years. In 1717, in Doshomachi, Osaka, Ichibei Fushimiya first opened the apothecary that would eventually become Ono Pharmaceutical Co.,Ltd. Since then, the company has been dedicated to developing innovative and breakthrough pharmaceutical products. The company's scientists have driven drug discovery through the adoption of world-leading technologies and knowledge. In 2024, Ono Pharmaceutical Co.,Ltd. acquired Deciphera Pharmaceuticals, Inc., a US biopharmaceutical company. 300 years after Ichibei Fushimiya opened his apothecary, Ono Pharma USA, Inc., a fully owned subsidiary based in Cambridge, MA, founded the independent Ono Pharma Foundation. The Foundation is a continuation of Ono's commitment to scientific innovation and drug discovery.

3. Who is TCC Group?

Formed in 1980, TCC Group provides strategic planning, program development, evaluation, and management consulting services to foundations, nonprofit organizations, corporate community involvement programs, and government agencies. Its consulting staff includes individuals with wide-ranging expertise and experience in a diverse range of issues including education, arts and culture, community and economic development, human services, health care, children and family issues, and the environment. TCC Group is providing ongoing strategic and administrative support for the Ono Pharma Foundation.