

**Innovation Grants in the Basic and Social Sciences
Funding Opportunity**

**Request for Applications (RFA)
Letters of Intent**

Due: February 28, 2018 at 5:00pm EST

I. Key Dates

RFA Announcement:	January 22, 2018
Registration of intent to apply:	by February 5, 2018 at 5:00pm EST
Letters of Intent Due:	February 28, 2018 at 5:00pm EST
Invitations for Full Applications:	Week of March 26, 2018
Full Applications Due:	May 11, 2018 at 5:00pm EDT
Funding Decisions Announced:	June 2018
Anticipated Funding Start Date:	June 2018

II. Award Amount

To support innovative research projects based in HMS Quadrangle laboratories, grants will be awarded for up to \$150,000 per PI per year, direct costs, for two years. A third year of funding may be awarded contingent on success in the first two years. A key indicator of success will be prospects for successful follow-on grant funding for the project from the NIH or another external funding source after the third year.

Applications for collaborative, interdisciplinary projects from two or more PIs/co-PIs from different HMS Quad departments will be given preference. In all cases, the lead PI must be an HMS ladder faculty member with her/his primary laboratory on the Quad. Collaborative projects from PIs/co-PIs within the same HMS Quad department, single-PI applications, and applications with one or more co-PIs from other Harvard schools or HMS-affiliated institutions will also be considered. Especially encouraged are applications to “boost” existing projects to the point that they are competitive for external, full-IDC-bearing funding by the end of the second year.

Approximately \$4 million will be awarded in this funding cycle. Additional funding cycles will run roughly every 6 months for the next few years.

III. Overview and Goals

Innovation Grants in the Basic and Social Sciences will fund exciting new discovery science, technology development projects, and studies that work to improve quality, costs and access to medical care. Funded projects are expected to lead to follow-on funding by generating preliminary data for NIH, foundation, or corporate grants. This program will support the best scholarship overall as well as areas of strategic focus that will be announced in future requests for proposals.

The goal of the Innovation Grant program is to substantially enhance existing projects in HMS Quad laboratories and existing or new collaborations between HMS faculty members. Awards may be used to provide support for creative graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who may bridge two or more labs. Support for staff members may be requested as well. However, to promote budget relief, it is preferred that funds are used as much as possible to support existing laboratory personnel.

Budgets will be submitted at the full-application stage. For planning purposes, some preliminary guidance is provided here:

- There will be a maximum of one new FTE allowed per PI/co-PI (graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, technical or professional staff).

- All PIs and Co-PIs are expected to budget at least 5% salary and effort on the award. Faculty who are not permitted to budget salary on applications of this type (e.g., HHMI investigators) should budget effort but not salary.
- Collaborative applications may request up to \$150,000 per PI per year.
- Single-PI applications may request up to \$100,000 per year.
- Co-PIs from other Harvard schools or HMS-affiliated institutions are asked to approach their school or home institution for matching funds: one half of the co-PI's budget must be provided by their school or home institution. For example, if a co-PI from an HMS-affiliated institution requests a total budget of \$150,000, \$75,000 of this request must be provided by the affiliated institution and \$75,000 would be provided by the Dean's Initiative.
- Indirect costs required by other Harvard schools or HMS-affiliated institutions must be budgeted within the award from the Dean's Initiative. No additional funds to cover indirect costs will be provided.

IV. Eligibility

This is a two-part limited submission competition. In the pre-proposal phase, PIs will submit a 1.5-page Letter of Intent (LOI). Based on the LOIs, selected PIs will be invited to submit a full application that will include a longer proposal, budget justification, as well as standard administrative documents.

V. Intellectual Property

It is anticipated that intellectual property may be developed through work on projects funded by the Innovation Grant program. Regardless of the location at which the work is performed (whether in facilities of Harvard or of an HMS-affiliated Institution):

- if co-PI or other employee of an HMS-affiliated institution creates intellectual property through work on a project funded by the Innovation Grant program, the employing institution will own his or her interest in that intellectual property; and
- if any PI or other individual employed by or enrolled as a student at Harvard creates intellectual property through work on a project funded by the Innovation Grant program, Harvard will own his or her interest in that intellectual property.

Lead Principal Investigator (PI) Eligibility

Any faculty member who holds a Harvard Medical School Quad appointment as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor, whose laboratory is located on the HMS Quad and/or whose grants are managed by an HMS Quad Department, is eligible to be the lead PI. There can be a maximum of one lead PI per application.

Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) Eligibility

A Co-PI collaborator contributes to the intellectual development of the project, designs the study or a part thereof, and is involved with the study throughout the term of funding. Faculty members with appointments as Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, or Professor at HMS, other Harvard Schools, and HMS-affiliated institutions are eligible as Co-PIs. Trainees (e.g., students, clinical trainees, postdoctoral fellows, and clinical fellows) cannot serve as the Co-PI of an application.

At least one Co-PI is encouraged but not required. A limit of 4 Co-PIs may be listed on an application.

For the Letter of Intent round, researchers may submit only one application as PI or Co-PI.

For questions regarding eligibility, see contact information below in Section VII.

V. Letter of Intent Submission Information

Letters will be submitted and tracked via the Harvard Catalyst Apply Hub system at https://apply.catalyst.harvard.edu/offering_cycles/161/application/new. Apply Hub requires login via Harvard Medical School eCommons username and password, or via Harvard Key (<http://catalyst.harvard.edu/services/loginfaq.html>).

If you have not used Apply Hub before, you will be asked to register on a “My Account” page with your name and your email address.

The online application itself is a two-part form. Please provide the following information.

Note: The letter of intent application must be initiated in Apply Hub on or before February 5, 2018 and the PI and collaborator information must be completed by that date. This will allow the administrators of the program to begin to recruit the review committee.

Part 1 – Application Form and Letter of Intent

- Full name of the submitter
- Email address of the submitter
- Lead Principal Investigator (PI) Information
 - Full name of PI (edit if not the same as submitter)
 - Email address of the PI (edit if not the same as submitter)
 - PI NIH eRA Commons username
 - Degree(s)
 - Faculty rank/position
 - Institution
 - Department
 - Optional administrative contact name, phone number, and email address
- Collaborator information
 - At least one Co-Principal Investigator is encouraged but not required, and a maximum of 4 Co-PIs may be listed on an application.
 - Full name of Co-PI
 - Email address of Co-PI
 - Degree(s)
 - Faculty rank/position
 - Institution
 - Department
 - Phone number
- Title of Proposal
- Administrative Questions
 - Does your study require IRB approval? If yes, do you have it?
 - Does your study require IACUC approval? If yes, do you have it?
 - Have you ever applied for funding or published with any of your co-PIs? If yes, please describe briefly.
- Supporting Document
 - Letter of Intent (to be uploaded as a .pdf): Arial and font size of 11 point only. The **1.5 page** letter (covering items 1-4 below) should be single-spaced, with 0.7-inch margins.
 1. Title of project
 2. PI name and HMS Department affiliation
 3. Specific Aims (1 page)
 - a. Briefly describe the background and significance of the proposed research.
 - b. List the specific aims of the project and briefly describe each.

- c. Format and content should be similar to Specific Aims page in NIH grants.
4. Provide some detail about the impact, collaboration, and follow-on plans (½ page)
 - a. Briefly describe the impact of the proposed research.
 - b. Describe the collaboration you are proposing, if any.
 - c. Describe how the proposed project will lead to follow-on projects that might be supported in the future via external funding opportunities.
5. References: Please list references cited on a separate page and keep the length of the reference list to a maximum of one page.

Part 2 – Confirmation

There will be a confirmation page displaying all information entered. You will then be able to submit the application. All application materials can be reopened and resubmitted before the deadline.

Paper copies of the application or any other accompanying documentation will not be accepted. All application materials must be submitted no later than 5:00pm EDT on February 28, 2018.

Successful submissions will result in an automated email response sent to the submitter of the application. This email acknowledgement will contain an application ID number that should be used in all future correspondence regarding the pre-proposal application. It will also include a URL that allows you to access the application within Apply Hub.

VI. Review Process and Criteria

Completed pre-proposals submitted by the specified deadline will be reviewed for scientific merit and technical feasibility.

Reviewers may consider questions such as the following:

- Do the investigators have the requisite skills, experience, and resources to execute the project within the funding period?
- Is the proposed research innovative?
- Would a successful outcome enable the applicants to apply for follow-on funding from other sources within 18-24 months?

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review during the week of March 26, 2018. Selected applicants will be invited to submit full applications.

VII. Contact Information

All inquiries related to the application process, eligibility, and/or scientific research areas should be directed to Anna Frye, deansinitiatives@hms.harvard.edu. A copy of this RFA is available online at <https://hms.harvard.edu/about-hms/deans-corner/deans-initiatives>.