

SUBJECT: PSOM Limited Application - FY25 Moore Foundation Inventor Fellows Program
TO: School of Medicine Faculty
FROM: Katherine L. Nathanson, MD and Matthew D. Weitzman, PhD
Co-Chairs, PSOM Limited Applications Selection Committee
<https://www.moore.org/initiative-strategy-detail?initiativeId=moore-inventor-fellows>

The University has been invited to nominate two candidates for the 2025 Moore Foundation Inventor Fellows Program. The Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR) is managing the final candidate review and selection process; each school within the University may submit the names of up to two candidates (**Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is also an invited institution and faculty based at the hospital should apply through CHOP and may not apply through both CHOP and PSOM**).

The Foundation seeks to identify outstanding inventors and innovators who harness science and technology to enhance the conduct of scientific research, strengthen environmental conservation, or improve the experience and outcomes of patient care. The Moore Inventor Fellows program focuses on supporting scientist-inventors at a critical prototyping stage to capture opportunities that otherwise might be missed, providing freedom and support to promising inventors with the most compelling ideas to pursue creative and disruptive innovations.

Program Description:

Important information from the [guidelines](#):

“The scope of this call is intentionally wide: proposed projects do not need to fall within the Moore Foundation’s current funding priorities, but should be broadly within the program areas of foundation interest ([science](#), [environmental conservation](#), and [patient care](#)). Patient care inventions should resonate with our focus on improving the experience and outcomes of patients with solutions that improve clinical diagnosis.

We aim to support inventions at an early stage that could lead to proof-of-concept of an invention or advance an existing prototype that tackles an important problem. We seek innovations that promise to make a long-lasting and meaningful impact by addressing underlying problems in their field, but a clear path toward commercialization is not a requirement. For this opportunity we are not interested in supporting fundamental research projects or projects already at a stage where significant venture capital is available. As with all our grants, we seek to measure progress toward a defined goal during the three years of support. The foundation’s policy is that intellectual property that results from a grant must be managed and disseminated in a manner that leads to the greatest impact. Each award will include IP terms to reflect the needs of that project.

We recognize real inventions can take surprising turns, so we seek creative individuals who have big ideas, deep knowledge, and the courage to take smart risks. We recognize inventors and innovators come from a diversity of backgrounds, disciplines and experiences and seek creative individuals across a broad array of academic programs and research institutions. Examples of such programs include but are not limited to **environmental science and conservation, remote sensing, artificial intelligence, big data, climatology, emerging infectious diseases, biology, oceanography, engineering, physics, chemistry, materials science, neuroscience, and public health.**”

From FAQ: “Proposed research should not include clinical trials and awarded funds should not be used to cover clinical trials.”

Eligibility:

- Candidates must be faculty, research scientists, postdocs, or other full-time staff at eligible institutions.
- Candidates must be **no more than ten years past receiving the terminal advanced degree in their field** (M.S., Ph.D. or M.D. received on or after 2015). [See FAQ](#) for exceptions for clinical training for physicians.
- **Institutional contribution:** Host institutions will be required to make a contribution of \$50,000 in annual support of the inventor’s work. This can be “in kind” as released time or access to special facilities for

which there is normally a charge. The \$50,000 institutional contribution could include support for undergraduate or graduate students, equipment, supplies, and other needs that will enable the fellow to make progress on their work. Direct salary support is acceptable provided it includes a proportionate release of time from teaching or other duties. Funds that were designated for a fellow's use before the fellow was awarded a Moore Inventor Fellowship (such as start-up funds) do not qualify.

- Each fellow will be personally engaged in pursuing their invention and is required to devote at least 25% of their own time to their invention. Fellows may use the grant funds to support their own salary to create this opportunity. They may also hire research personnel and purchase services, equipment, or supplies.

Award Amount:

- \$200,000 per year for three years.
- Foundation will provide the host institution with \$25,000 each year to cover costs associated with administering the grant award, resulting in a total 3-year award of \$675,000.

PSOM Review Process:

Proposals for the internal competition will be evaluated using the Moore criteria:

Note: The Moore Foundation has a two-step review process. In the first, each submission will be reviewed by Foundation staff with advice from external reviewers. In the second, 10 finalists will be invited to make a virtual video presentation to a panel of advisors on the importance, plausibility, status and possible impact of their proposed line of work.

Evaluation Criteria

In the **first round**, the following questions are used to evaluate each application:

- Rate the candidate's capabilities as an inventor.
- Rate the potential of the proposed invention to make a difference in the foundation's areas of interest: scientific discovery, environmental conservation, and/or patient care.
- Rate the potential for measurable progress within a 3-year period.

In the **second round**, the following questions are used to evaluate each application:

- Rate the candidate's capabilities as an inventor.
- Rate the potential impact of the proposed project.
- Rate the plausibility of the invention to achieve its stated impact.
- Rate the potential for measurable progress within a 3-year period.
- Rate the overall application, considering both the inventor and invention.

PSOM Submission Requirements:

Each nomination must include the following materials:

- **Cover page** with nominee's name, degrees, date of terminal degree, department, school, email address, phone number, proposal title, and attestation statement that the inventor has at least 25% of their time to devote to the invention and \$50,000 in annual direct support of the inventor's work.
- **Statement of invention** (no more than two pages, *including citations*; single-spaced, 12-point font with one-inch margins). The first paragraph should describe clearly and without jargon the invention, the problem it seeks to address and its potential impact. The statement of invention should also include the following information:
 - Description of invention, stage of invention, feasibility, and current funding.
 - Importance to the Foundation's focus areas (Science, Patient Care, and Environmental Conservation), potential impact, risks, and approach to measuring success and progress over the 3-year fellowship.

- Please describe any technical risks that might lower chances of success and what you will do mitigate these risks. For example, “If A doesn't work, we'll do B.”
- **CV or Biosketch**

Note: If selected as a Penn applicant by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR), two letters of reference will be required that evaluate the promise of the applicant and the invention: one from an individual within the nominating institution and one from an individual from another institution. Letters should be no more than two pages.

Applications must be submitted in a single pdf file in the above order. Subject line of email as well as pdf document should be Moore_Inventors_Pi surname_Pi first name, e.g. Moore_Inventors_Smith_Jane. Please submit all materials to Kaitlyn Hagarty at kaitlyn.hagarty@penmedicine.upenn.edu by **12pm on Monday, September 16th.**

Questions can also be directed to Kaitlyn at Kaitlyn.hagarty@penmedicine.upenn.edu.