

TO: School of Medicine Faculty
FROM: Katherine L. Nathanson, MD and Matthew D. Weitzman, PhD
Co-Chairs, PSOM Limited Applications Selection Committee
RE: FY25 Mathers Grant Program
<https://mathersfoundation.org/>

We are pleased to announce that the University has been invited to nominate three candidates for the Mathers Grant 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 three 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**).

Program summary: For many years the G. Harold and Leila Y. Mathers Foundation has enjoyed special recognition in the research community in supporting "basic" scientific research, realizing that true transformative breakthroughs usually occur after a thorough understanding of the fundamental mechanisms underlying natural phenomena. More recently, and with the advent of newer investigative methodologies, technology, and tools, the Foundation now embraces innovative translational research proposals. Immunology, microbiome, genomics, structural biology, cellular physiology, neuroscience, etc., are some noteworthy examples of current research support. In general, the Mathers Foundation reviewers look for innovative, novel proposals, which have scientific merit with an established published proof of concept, and which may not be fundable at the federal level.

Eligibility:

- Open to faculty at all levels.
- Open to faculty involved in **life science research in areas such as (but not limited to): Immunology, microbiome, genomics, structural biology, cellular physiology, and neuroscience**. It is important to note that any interdisciplinary project proposals may require additional information regarding collaborator(s)' achievements and relevant expertise.
- For any sponsored research projects, the applicant must be eligible to serve as Principal Investigator for the project, unless otherwise noted in the LSO. Please see [Penn's PI Eligibility requirements](#) to ensure you are eligible.

The Foundation does not support:

- Covid-19 related research projects (aims or sub-aims).
- Medical imaging technology related projects and/or electrical engineering technology development projects.
- Plant Biology Research, Oceanography, Space Exploration and Global Warming related research.
- Requests for support of clinical trials or drug discovery. The Foundation will not support projects which they consider pre-clinical drug development.
- Requests for funding previous federally supported research, and/or applications pending federal approval will not be accorded priority consideration.
- Expenses for computers, computer-generated systems/and AI data generation.

- Renewal applications for the same or related research will not be accorded priority consideration. It is strongly advised that any re-application for grant renewal consider a new direction based on prior research or emphasize some new potential translational aspects and not merely an extension of previously funded research.

Award information:

- Grant duration must be three years.
- Grant budgets cannot exceed \$600-700K (including indirect costs capped at 10%) over three years.
- Preliminary Budgets are required during the LOI phase and should include an estimate of the major costs for compensation, supplies, etc.
- Budget justification in Formal Proposals (**if invited**) should provide detailed costs of the investigator's salaries, including all personnel involved, laboratory supplies, miscellaneous costs, etc., and will be highly scrutinized:
 - The Foundation's grant award is not intended to be utilized for purchasing capital equipment ("bricks and mortar") for the lab and is intended only to support the actual investigation.
 - Tuition expenses (remission) may not be covered for personnel (graduate students involved in the project) if considered excessive (benefits/fringe rate, including health insurance, may be approved on a case-by-case basis, notwithstanding agreements with other agencies, i.e. DHHS).
 - Expenses for core services (e.g. Cryo-EM, sequencing) may not be approved if considered excessive.
 - Expenses for computers, computer-generated systems/and AI data generation cannot be expensed.

PSOM Application Requirements

To be considered, applicants must submit information in a single PDF in the following order:

- **Cover page** which includes:
 - Project title
 - Candidate name, department, address, phone, email
 - Date of faculty appointment to the University including month and year
- **Research Proposal** that includes the following (3 pages maximum, not including references):
 - A preliminary set of aims and a description of how this fits the funder's interests.
 - A discussion of previous or related work.
 - A preliminary budget estimate should include an estimate of the major costs for compensation, supplies, etc.
 - Note: The proposal should be a single-spaced, 12-point font with one-inch margins. Please craft the research statement in a manner that is easily understood by a broad audience.

- **CV or Biosketch**, which includes educational background, professional appointments, awards, and honors. Include all current research support (start-up and external) and pending support, including dollar amounts and start/end dates.

Submission should be in a single pdf file in the following order: cover page, letter of intent, CV or biosketch. The pdf document should be titled as follows: Mathers__InvestigatorSurname_Investigator first name. For example: Mathers_Doe_Jane.pdf.

Applications are due by **9:00AM** on **Thursday, August 22nd** and should be e-mailed to: Kaitlyn Hagarty at kaitlyn.hagarty@penmedicine.upenn.edu.

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