

TO: School of Medicine Faculty
FROM: Katherine L. Nathanson, MD and Matthew D. Weitzman, PhD
Co-Chairs, PSOM Limited Applications Selection Committee
RE: FY26 Mathers Grant Program (Spring Cycle)
<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 CHOP 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 for 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’s grants program seeks to support innovative, potentially transformative basic science projects in fields including immunology, microbiome, genetics, genomics, structural biology, cellular physiology, cancer biology, microbiology and infectious disease, stem cell biology, and neuroscience.

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.**
- Collaborative research projects with other US-based organizations are acceptable. However, research collaborations between US-based organizations and organizations based outside the US are not encouraged and will be given lower priority. 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 will not be approved. The Foundation will not support projects that they consider pre-clinical drug development.

- Medical imaging technology related projects and/or electrical engineering technology development projects will not be considered.
- 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 are not supported.

Award information:

- Grant budgets cannot exceed \$600-700K (including indirect costs capped at 10%) over three years.
- Preliminary Budgets: 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 (only if invited), budget justification should provide detailed costs of the investigator's salaries, including all personnel involved, laboratory supplies, miscellaneous costs, etc., and will be highly scrutinized.
- Capital Equipment: 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: 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 (e.g., DHHS).
- Core Services: Expenses for core services (e.g., Cryo-EM, sequencing) may not be approved if considered excessive.

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, academic rank, department, campus address, phone, email
 - Date of faculty appointment to the University (month and year)
 - Category of research
- **Research Proposal** that includes the following (maximum 2 pages, not including references; single-spaced, 12-point font with one-inch margins):
 - Proof of Concept, Previous or Related Work: Provide a discussion of previous or related work. Identify which is preliminary and which is published.
 - Aims of Project: Experimental aims and sub-aims should be included.
 - Note: Please craft the research statement in a manner that is easily understood by a broad scientific audience.
- **CV or Biosketch**, including current, past, and pending funding with award amounts (direct dollars per year).

- **Prior Submission Update:** If you have submitted for this funding mechanism in the past, please provide on a separate page a brief explanation (1-5 sentences) explaining how the current application differs from prior submissions, highlighting any significant updates or changes to the proposal or your circumstances.

Submission should be in a single pdf file in the following order: cover page, research proposal, CV or biosketch, prior submission update (if applicable). The pdf document should be titled as follows: Mathers__InvestigatorSurname_Investigator first name. For example: Mathers_Doe_Jane.pdf.

Applications are due by **12:00 PM on Friday, December 5, 2025** and should be e-mailed to: Kaitlyn Hagarty at kaitlyn.hagarty@pennmedicine.upenn.edu.

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