



Request for Letters of Intent

Health Equity Research Grant

2026 Grantees

Purpose

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance is requesting Letters of Intent (LOI) for the 2026 Health Equity Research Grant.

Despite major advances in ovarian cancer research over the past 20 years, addressing health disparities is an area in which significant progress has yet to be made. OCRA believes that every ovarian cancer patient should have the opportunity to attain the best possible care and treatment outcomes, and that their socioeconomic status, geographic location, or racial or ethnic background should not impact the likelihood of reaching those goals.

The objective of this grantmaking program is to support research projects that promote equity, inclusivity, and evidence-based approaches to overcome the barriers faced by marginalized communities with a focus on ovarian cancers and/or related gynecologic cancers. For the purposes of this grant, marginalized communities are defined as groups that have historically struggled with equal access to care due to gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability status, and language barriers. We encourage researchers that are from groups underrepresented in sciences to apply, but this is not a requirement of the grant.

Research Projects may encompass a wide range of research areas, including but not limited to:

- Identifying and addressing social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to health disparities in ovarian cancer
- Improving access to quality care, diagnostic tools, and treatment options for underserved communities affected by ovarian cancer
- Exploring the impact of racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, or geographic disparities on disease progression and survival rates
- Investigating the genetic and molecular factors influencing ovarian cancer disparities and potential therapeutic approaches

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1. Principal Investigators at all stages of their careers are eligible to apply. Applicants must have either their PhD, ScD, MD or other doctoral degree at the time of application.
2. There must be a clearly defined research project with aims related to health equity with a focus on ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers. Projects looking for funding for community programs without a defined research component are not eligible for this grant.
3. Funding is only available to accredited non-profit universities/colleges, non-profit research hospitals, or a recognized non-profit scientific research facility. OCRA does not offer funding to any for-profit entities, consulting companies, or non-profits who are not conducting the research themselves.
4. The selection committee will consider most favorably applications that are creative, original, that seek to understand or reduce health disparities in ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers.
5. The primary review criteria will be the likelihood that the investigators can leverage this funding to explore ideas specifically related to reducing health disparities, with long-term impact for the field. The ideal project would provide resources to promote the generation of data, which would be capable of performing high-impact research and competing successfully for additional funding, and the authorship of impactful scientific publications. The proposed projects may be new research projects or may be part of ongoing research.
6. There are no citizenship requirements for OCRA Grants, international applicants are welcome to apply.
7. Proposed projects that do NOT have a scientific research project focused on health equity in ovarian cancer and/or other related gynecological cancers are not eligible for this grant.
8. Each applicant may submit only one LOI per grant cycle.
9. Grant recipients can only have 1 OCRA grant active at a time, if the grant recipient already has an active OCRA grant, the current grant must end before the new grant may begin.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, please contact us (see last page).

Terms of Grant

Support of up to \$100,000USD annually for two years (\$200,000 USD total) will be granted to the institution of the Principal Investigator. The Health Equity Research Grant will have a start date of February 1, 2026. Grant recipients will be required to submit activation deliverables and annual progress reports (narrative and financial) throughout the life of the grant. It is expected that the project will result in peer-reviewed publication(s). Any publications or presentations of work resulting from this grant should acknowledge support from OCRA.

Selection Process

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by the distinguished members of the medical, research and patient advocacy community from across North America. The majority of LOIs will be triaged at this stage; only a fraction of those submitting LOIs will be invited to submit full proposals.

We recognize that preparing a full application requires a significant amount of time and energy for investigators, and we believe this process will ensure that only those applications most likely to be

competitive will advance to the final round of selection. *Please note that due to the small size of the OCRA staff and Scientific Advisory Committee, we are not able to provide feedback to applicants on their LOIs or Full Proposals.*

Timeline

The submission deadline for LOIs is 5:00pm Eastern Time (NY) on March 26, 2025. Late submissions and extension requests are not permitted. All applicants will be notified of their status in mid-May 2025. Please be sure to add grants@ocrahope.org to your safe sender list in your email so you can get all emails from OCRA's grant system. For those selected to submit full proposals, full proposals will be due mid-June 2025.

Application Process

Letters of Intent must be submitted in English via the [SmartSimple](https://ocra.us-1.smartsimple.com/) website (<https://ocra.us-1.smartsimple.com/>) **by 5:00pm ET on March 26, 2025** by the Principal Investigator.

The SmartSimple website is easy to use and will lead you through the completion of the LOI. We recommend you log into the website soon and familiarize yourself with the website as well as the required parts of the LOI.

Beyond basic contact information about yourself (the Principal Investigator) and any key personnel (if applicable), LOIs must include the following:

1. **Scientific Abstract** – Provide a summary of the proposed research project. The abstract should clearly outline your proposed research project & aims, an overview of the research team, and resources for the project to allow the reviewers a clear understanding of your proposed project. The abstract should be presented in 6,000 characters or less (including spaces). Text only; figures, images, and graphs are not permitted.
2. **PI BioSketch** -- A current NIH biosketch for the PI is required (must match the person submitting the LOI in SmartSimple). Please use the NIH Biosketch template available for download in SmartSimple and adhere to its instructions and space limitations.
3. **Key Personnel Biosketches** -- NIH biosketches should be provided for anyone you listed in SmartSimple as Key Personnel. All key personnel biosketches should be combined into one document and uploaded as a single PDF. Please use the biosketch template available for download in SmartSimple, and adhere to its instructions and space limitations.
4. **Budget** -- Requested total budget amount in USD for the entire grant. A detailed budget is not required during the LOI.

No figures, references, appendices, detailed budgets, or letters of recommendation or collaboration are required or accepted at this stage.

Answers to frequently asked questions about the application process are available online [here](https://ocrahope.org/research/for-grantees/grant-application-faq/) (<https://ocrahope.org/research/for-grantees/grant-application-faq/>).

Technical Support

If you are having technical problems with SmartSimple please email OCRA – grants@ocrahope.org. SmartSimple works best when using Google Chrome. Be sure your pop ups are not blocked on your web browser as some items will open a new window.

Questions about the substantive aspects of the application should be directed to Kristin McGowan (contact info below).

About OCRA

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA) is the oldest and largest ovarian and gynecologic cancer charity in the world. Since its founding in 1994, OCRA has grown into the leading non-government funder of ovarian and related gynecologic cancer research. Through innovative education and advocacy efforts, compassionate support programs, and cross-industry collaboration, OCRA is driving progress and pushing the boundaries of what's possible to improve outcomes for patients and advance research in its quest for a cure. Visit ocrahope.org to learn more.

For inquiries or further information, please contact:

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