



Request for Letters of Intent

Health Equity Research Grant

2027 Grantees

Purpose

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA) invites Letters of Intent (LOIs) for the 2027 Health Equity Research Grant.

Despite significant advances in ovarian cancer research over the past two decades, meaningful progress in reducing health disparities remains limited. OCRA is committed to ensuring that every patient has access to the highest quality care and outcomes, regardless of socioeconomic status, geographic location, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, or language.

This grant supports scientific research projects that advance equity, inclusivity, and evidence-based approaches to address barriers faced by marginalized communities in ovarian and/or related gynecologic cancers. For this program, marginalized communities include groups that have historically experienced unequal access to care due to gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, disability status, and language barriers.

Researchers from groups underrepresented in science are encouraged to apply, though this is not a requirement.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1. Researcher Requirements

- a. 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.
- b. There are no citizenship requirements for OCRA Grants; international applicants are welcome to apply.

2. Proposed Research Project Requirements:

- a. Projects must focus on ovarian cancer or demonstrate clear, direct relevance to ovarian cancer, including work in related gynecologic cancers.
- b. Research projects may address a broad range of areas, including but not limited to:
 - Identifying and addressing social, cultural, and economic factors contributing to health disparities in ovarian cancer
 - Improving access to quality care, diagnostic tools, and treatment options for underserved communities
 - Examining racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, or geographic disparities in disease progression and survival outcomes

- Investigating genetic or molecular factors underlying ovarian cancer disparities and potential therapeutic approaches
- c. OCRA does not fund community programs, service initiatives, advocacy activities, or other non-research projects. All proposals must include a defined scientific research component that aligns with the focus described above.
- 3. Institutional Eligibility and Applicant Limits:**
- a. Funding is limited to accredited academic institutions (e.g., universities and colleges) and other eligible research institutions, provided they are non-profit, including research hospitals, research institutes, and recognized scientific research facilities. OCRA does not provide funding to for-profit entities, consulting companies, non-research organizations, or non-profits that are not conducting the research themselves.
 - b. An individual may serve as Principal Investigator on only one LOI; however, they may participate in additional LOIs in another role, provided they are not the lead PI.
 - c. A PI may hold only one active OCRA grant at a time. If a PI has an active OCRA grant, it must conclude before a new grant may begin.
- 4. Review Considerations:**
- Applications will be evaluated based on their scientific merit, originality, and potential impact on reducing health disparities in ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers.
- a. The selection committee will give strongest consideration to projects that:
 - i. Demonstrate creativity and innovation in addressing health equity challenges
 - ii. Show strong potential to generate meaningful data that advances the field
 - iii. Position investigators to pursue high-impact research, secure additional funding, and produce impactful scientific publications
 - b. Proposed projects may represent new research initiatives or clearly defined aims within ongoing research programs.

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.
- Health Equity Research Grants will have a start date of February 1, 2027.
- 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. Last year, only ~18% of LOIs were invited to the full proposal stage.

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 can not provide feedback to applicants on their LOIs or Full Proposals.

Timeline

- **LOI Deadline: 5:00pm Eastern Time (NY) on March 25, 2026.**
- Late submissions and extension requests are not permitted.
- All applicants will be notified of their status in mid-May 2026.
- For those selected to submit full proposals, full proposals will be due mid-June 2026.

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.

Application Process

Letters of Intent must be submitted in English via SmartSimple: <https://ocra.us-1.smartsimple.com/> by **5:00 PM ET on March 25, 2026.**

The LOI must be submitted through the Principal Investigator's (PI's) SmartSimple account. The individual logged into SmartSimple when the LOI is created will automatically be designated as the PI.

Applicants are encouraged to log into SmartSimple early to review system requirements.

Required Components:

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. The abstract should be presented in 6,000 characters or less (including spaces). Text only; figures, images, and graphs are not permitted.

2. BioSketches

NIH biosketches are required for all listed investigators and key personnel and must use the NIH biosketch template available in SmartSimple. *If an individual does not have an eRA Commons user name, this field may be left blank.*

- a. **Principal Investigator (PI):** A current NIH biosketch for the PI (must be the submitting applicant).
- b. **Key Personnel:** NIH biosketches for all other listed key personnel, combined into one PDF.

3. Budget

Indicate the estimated **total** funding amount requested, up to \$200,000 USD, inclusive of indirect costs. A detailed budget is not required at the LOI stage.

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 largest global organization dedicated to combating ovarian and all gynecologic cancer. Since its founding in 1994, OCRA has invested \$140 million in scientific breakthroughs, and supports 95,000 people annually through its programs, which are free to all participants. As the only dedicated voice for ovarian and gynecologic cancer on Capitol Hill, OCRA has helped to secure \$3.8 billion in federal research and education funding. Learn more at ocrahope.org.

For inquiries or further information, please contact:

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