



Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance

Request for Letters of Intent

Mentored Investigator Grant

2027 Grantees

Purpose

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance is requesting Letters of Intent (LOI) for the 2027 Mentored Investigator Grant (MIG). This grant provides funding for trainees who are working under the supervision of a mentor who is a recognized leader in the field of ovarian cancer research and/or related gynecologic cancers.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1. Researcher Requirements

- a. Applicants (Principal Investigator) must be either clinical fellows or post-doctoral fellows with protected time to do the proposed work.
- b. Candidates for this grant must have an MD/DO and/or PhD degree at the time of submitting the LOI.
- c. PhD applicants must be **no more than 5 years** out of their terminal degree at time of application (e.g. terminal degree must have been awarded during 2021 or later).
- d. MD/DOs and MD/PhDs must be currently enrolled in a fellowship program.
- e. Although the applicant may take part in some non-research activities (e.g. class work, clinical activities), **at least 80% effort should be devoted to research** during the tenure of the OCRA grant.
- f. Applicants should be involved in either laboratory, clinical, epidemiologic or health services research.
- g. There are no citizenship requirements for OCRA Grants; international applicants are welcome to apply.

2. Project and Mentorship Requirements:

- a. Project:
 - i. Applicants (the PI) may choose whether their grant is active for 1 or 2 years.
 - ii. The project proposed should be one that the trainee's mentor believes will advance the overall scientific objectives of the research group.
 - iii. Projects must focus on ovarian cancer or demonstrate clear, direct relevance to ovarian cancer, including work in related gynecologic cancers.
 - iv. Projects focusing on Cancer Control and Population Sciences (CCPS), including (but not limited to) risk and outcome studies, survivorship, and health services research are encouraged to apply.
- b. Mentors:
 - i. Letters of Intent must select a mentor; only one mentor can be listed.
 - ii. Each mentor may support only one applicant per year. We encourage research groups to vet concepts so that only one LOI is submitted for this grant.

- iii. Mentors should have significant independent cancer research funding (NCI, DOD, OCRA, etc.).
- iv. Mentors must be at the same institution as the applicant.
- v. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants will be required to provide a minimum of 1 letter of recommendation from someone in a position to mentor the applicant.

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 (PI) on only one Letter of Intent (LOI) per grant cycle. This limit applies across all grant opportunities within the same cycle. Individuals may participate in additional LOIs but only in a non-PI role.
- 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.
- d. Grant recipients may only receive OCRA's Mentored Investigator Grant once.

4. Review Considerations:

- a. The selection committee will consider the strength of the research environment and project proposal, the trainee's prior academic track record, and the likelihood of them pursuing a research career dedicated to ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers. Proposed projects should focus on ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers.

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

Terms of Grant

- Support of up to \$100,000 USD to be used over one or two years will be granted to the institution of the Principal Investigator.
- Mentored Investigator Grants will have a start date of March 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 the mentor's responsibility to ensure that the investigator who receives this grant submits the required activation material and progress reports (narrative and financial) throughout the life of the grant.
- 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 Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), which is comprised of 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 ~25% 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 cannot 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 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

Biosketches are required for the PI and the mentor. Researchers may either use the biosketch template available in SmartSimple (a previously NIH-approved template), or create a biosketch using NIH SciENcv (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>) and select the NIH Biographical Sketch Common Form option. *If an individual does not have an eRA Commons username, this field may be left blank on the template available in SmartSimple.*

- a. **Principal Investigator (PI):** A current biosketch for the PI (must be the submitting applicant).
- b. **Mentor's Biosketch:** A current biosketch for the mentor is required

3. Budget

Indicate the estimated **total** funding amount requested, up to \$100,000 USD, inclusive of indirect costs. A detailed budget is not required at the LOI stage.

4. **Grant Length**

The applicant needs to select if they would like the grant active for 1 or 2 years.

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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