

Ono Pharma Foundation

Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program

Program Information & Overview

Introduction

Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. is a leading global healthcare company committed to delivering new, innovative pharmaceutical products to patients and championing the fight against disease and pain. Ono Pharmaceutical carries out these goals in cooperation with researchers, patients, their families, and healthcare providers.

The Ono Pharma Foundation was established to support academic research in relevant scientific fields, which have the potential of making significant impact on therapeutic approaches to disease. The Foundation's competitive awards program, the *Ono Pharma Breakthrough Science Initiative Awards Program* ("Ono Initiative"), is the embodiment of the Foundation's commitment to focus on and accelerate researcher-driven open innovation by supporting high-risk and high-reward science research projects which have the potential to lead to science discoveries/solutions and, possibly, based on further research, to breakthrough treatments for patients.

This document includes the following sections:

1. Mission
2. Description of the Ono Initiative
3. 2025 Application Schedule
4. Eligibility Requirements
5. Research Proposal Requirements
6. Selection Criteria
7. How to Apply
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1. Mission

The purpose of the Ono Initiative is to support scientist Principal Investigators ("PIs") with creative ideas in selected scientific research fields with the mission of seeking discoveries/solutions and development of high impact science.

The goals of the Ono Initiative are to:

- Identify and develop innovative research proposals and results that could lead to the development of breakthrough treatment solutions for patients.
- Support academic research and the career development of promising young and mid-career scientists
- Build strong relationships within the community in order to lead to transformative research aligned with the Ono Initiative's goals.

2. The Ono Initiative

Annually, the Ono Pharma Foundation considers proposals from PIs for research that could ultimately transform human health. Although additional areas of research may be added in future years, in 2025 the Ono Pharma Foundation will only consider proposals for scientific research projects addressing the following field of science:

- **Chemical Biology Research**

- Target research of Chemical Biology is not specified by the Ono Initiative. Subjects of interest include but are not limited to:
 - Modulating interactome and cell/tissue crosstalk
 - Manipulating biomolecular condensates and protein quality control systems
 - Deep understanding and emerging applications of chemical glycobiology
 - New concepts of drug delivery and localization to tissue/cell/organelle
 - Understanding and leveraging allostery in biology

- Chemical Biology is defined as research that deals with the interface between chemistry and biology. The criteria for this field are deliberately broad so as not to disqualify potentially innovative and groundbreaking projects.

Awards: Applications comprising laboratory investigation will be considered. Project duration may last up to three years with annual funding of \$300,000/year, totaling a maximum of \$900,000 for the normal term of a research project.

The Ono Pharma Foundation will provide up to a maximum of an additional 15% (\$45,000) per year of the funding to be used for indirect costs of the PI’s institution. The total amount of the three-year grant would be up to \$1,035,000.

Three Awards are planned for 2025, contingent upon Ono Pharma Foundation appropriations and the submission of sufficient meritorious applications.

Symposium: Awardees will be invited to an annual science symposium held by Ono Pharma Foundation. The Foundation will reimburse transportation and accommodation costs.

3. 2025 Application Schedule

There are two steps to the application process:

1. Letter of Interest (“**LOI**”) must be submitted by all nominated, interested, and eligible PIs.
2. A full Proposal must be submitted by invited and qualified PIs.

The timetable for both steps of the Application Process is outlined below in detail.

Step	Timeline	Responsible Party
Funding Opportunity Program Announcement	November 18, 2024	Ono Pharma Foundation
LOI submission open	November 18, 2024	Ono Pharma Foundation
LOI submission due date	February 14, 2025, 5pm ET *	PI/Institution
Request for Proposal (“ RFP ”) sent out	April, 2025	Ono Pharma Foundation
Proposal due date	May 8, 2025	PI
Announcement of the Awards	July, 2025	Ono Pharma Foundation

Project Start

August - October, 2025

PI

**Addenda, supplemental materials, changes, or updates will not be accepted after the deadline for submitting either the LOI or the Proposal.*

***As a US private foundation, Ono Pharma Foundation grants to Canadian institutions are conditioned on an equivalency determination by the Foundation. This may require additional documentation and information from the institution not currently listed in the application process.*

Brief reports will be required every six months after the granting of the Award. These reports will be a means for assuring that the research follows the approved Proposal in content and timeframe. A final study report will be due 180 days after Project completion.

Selection Committee: Review of LOIs, final Proposals, and selection of Awardees will be carried out by a Scientific Advisory Board (“**SAB**”) made up of experts from the previously identified science fields but external to Ono and the Ono Pharma Foundation.

- *All submitted material will be kept strictly confidential. The selected final Proposals will be attached to the Award document and to an agreement with the Nominating Institution.*
- *A preliminary review of submissions will be carried out by the Ono Pharma Foundation to ensure proposals fall within the scope of research areas and that there are no obvious concerns with the proposed research. If concerns are identified, the Proposal may not be accepted prior to evaluation by the SAB.*
- *Members of the SAB are not eligible to apply for an Award. However, serving as a mentor to a PI/ Applicant is permitted/encouraged.*

4. Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following requirements. LOIs and final Proposals from applicants not meeting the requirements listed below will not be considered.

- PIs applying must be working at one of the nominating institutions. Nominating institutions might be replaced or added to in subsequent years.
- The PI must have an MD and/or a PhD degree.
- The PI must be a new applicant to the Ono Initiative, or, if they are a returning applicant, must be applying for a project different from the one they previously proposed.
- The PI must be a young and/or mid-career scientist (15 years or below of experience from starting independent academic position).
- The PI may not already be engaged in other sponsored research and/or collaborative research with Ono Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. and/or grant program with Ono Pharma Foundation.
- The PI may not apply for funding to amplify current work. However, PIs may research a new idea based on a prior finding of the PI.
- The PI must not be a healthcare professional (defined as individuals currently holding an active state license for which they are (a) qualified to prescribe, administer, use or supply any medicinal or medical products or (b) perform any professional clinical services). A PI with an MD but without an active state medical license is still eligible.
- PIs serving on a healthcare formulary or similar committee are not eligible.

2025 Applicant Nominating Institutions in Chemical Biology Research *

1. Albert Einstein College of Medicine
2. Baylor College of Medicine
3. Boston College
4. California Institute of Technology
5. Carnegie Mellon University
6. Columbia University
7. Cornell University
8. Duke University
9. Emory University
10. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Institute
11. Georgia Institute of Technology
12. Harvard Medical School
13. Harvard University
14. Johns Hopkins University
15. Kennesaw State University
16. Louisiana State University
17. Loyola University Chicago
18. Massachusetts Institute of Technology
19. McGill University
20. Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center
21. Michigan State University
22. Northeastern University
23. Northwestern University
24. Ontario Tech University
25. Oregon Health and Science University
26. Princeton University
27. Purdue University
28. Rice University
29. Salk Institute for Biological Studies
30. Stanford University
31. Texas A&M University
32. The Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT
33. The Rockefeller University
34. The Scripps Research Institute
35. The University of Chicago
36. The University of Texas – Austin
37. The University of Texas – Southwestern Medical Center
38. The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center
39. The University of Utah
40. University of Alberta
41. University of British Columbia
42. University of California – Berkeley
43. University of California – Davis
44. University of California – Irvine
45. University of California – Los Angeles
46. University of California – San Diego
47. University of California – San Francisco
48. University of California – Santa Barbara
49. University of Florida
50. University of Illinois at Urbana – Champaign
51. University of Massachusetts – Amherst
52. University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
53. University of Michigan
54. University of Minnesota
55. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
56. University of Notre Dame
57. University of Pittsburgh
58. University of Toronto
59. University of Virginia
60. University of Washington
61. University of Wisconsin – Madison
62. Vanderbilt University
63. Virginia Commonwealth University
64. Washington University in St Louis
65. Wayne State University
66. Yale University

**Each Nominating Institution may nominate up to two (2) applicants in Chemical Biology Research.*

5. Research Proposal Requirements

Applicant PIs are expected to:

- Propose meaningfully novel research.
- Design studies and generate data to address at least one of the aforementioned fields of science.
- Complete the research, generally, within the full term of the Awards.

6. Selection Criteria

Applications will be assessed, and Awards will be made based upon the following criteria:

- Scientific merit of the research Proposal
- Relevance of proposed research to the mission of the Ono Initiative
 - Significance
 - Innovation
 - Approach
- Technical considerations for the research
- Qualifications and relevant experience of the PI
- Evidence of a suitable research environment

7. How to Apply

- **LOI:** PIs should first contact the administration office of their Institution. Institutions will be asked to nominate PIs, but only the PI may submit LOIs and Proposals. An LOI should be submitted through the Ono Pharma Foundation online portal. To access the website, please click on the link below, select “Submit a Request,” and follow the online instructions. If this is your first time visiting the portal, you will be sent your login information within 24 hours of submitting your “Registration”.

Please see below for links to the Ono Pharma Foundation website and application portal:

- Website: www.onofound.org
- Application Portal: <https://ono.fluxx.io>
- **LOI:** An LOI submission must include the following information:
 - Contact Information
 - Abstract – no more than 150 words. The abstract should provide a brief description of the PI’s project’s goal(s).
 - Vision of the Proposed Research – one page single-spaced 12pt font. CV and reference list do not contribute to word/page limit. Figures may be included but should not exceed an additional two pages. If there is a figure that best explains your project, please indicate which one. This will help our Scientific Advisory Board as they review.
 - Curriculum vitae (“**CV**”)
 - The CV may not exceed five pages;
 - NIH Biosketch format is preferred. The new format extends the page limit for the biosketch from four to **five pages** and allows researchers to describe up to five of their most significant contributions to science, along with the historical background that framed their research. Investigators can outline the central findings of prior work and the influence of those findings on the investigator’s field.
 - The CV must disclose all grants or awards currently received or pending which would be relevant to the Proposed Research.

- **Proposal:** PIs invited to submit a full Proposal will receive instructions via email and in the Ono Pharma Foundation portal. The Proposal – in response to the RFP – must include the following information:
 - A detailed Research Plan (no more than seven pages), including:
 1. Background on the area(s) of research and key gaps in our understanding of the field or important challenges to be addressed.
 2. Recent progress by the PI, focusing on the past five years. Do *not* repeat material adequately covered in the prior CV or Biosketch. Do *not* include a Publication List. Only include references as needed from the CV.
 3. Overview of the Research Proposal. This should be a description of the key questions or challenges the PI plans to address and the general strategies. A detailed experimental plan is not expected. The proposed direction of the PI’s scientific project will be considered in the review process. If new opportunities or directions arise during the course of the research, the PI will have the flexibility to change course and pursue them. If such a development should occur, the PI should be in touch promptly with the Ono Pharma Foundation.
 - Other research, describing overlap with Ono Initiative
 - Itemized PI budget for the Proposal– not part of the Proposal page/word limit
 - If needed, the prior CV can be updated.

8. Frequently Asked Questions

See the *Frequently Asked Questions* (“**FAQs**”) for additional help. You may also e-mail questions to TCC Group: ono@tccgrp.com.