



Request for Research Proposals

National PKU Alliance (NPKUA) works to improve the lives of individuals with phenylketonuria (PKU) and to pursue better treatments. As a part of this mission, NPKUA supports an annual grant program to advance the science of PKU by funding the most promising research that will lead to enhanced management, new therapeutic approaches and ultimately a cure to improve the lives of individuals with PKU.

NPKUA is seeking proposals that promote and encourage investigators to conduct PKU-related research, close existing gaps in the science and management of PKU and support existing PKU-related projects. The goals of the program are to fund projects that:

- Advance innovative approaches to PKU care, including new management strategies, novel therapeutics and/or a cure. A variety of management and treatment solutions are needed for people with PKU because it is not a one-size-fits-all disease.
- Promote the development and validation of clinical outcome assessment tools to support drug development and to improve treatment decisions to optimize the day-to-day management of PKU.
- Improve the quality of life for individuals with PKU, enabling them to live the best life possible.

While proposals across all PKU-related research areas will be considered, this grant cycle will be particularly interested research focused on the following high-priority topics:

- *Aging and PKU*: Are individuals with PKU more prone to neurodegenerative disorders, such as dementia? What co-morbidities are associated with aging in individuals with PKU?
- *Impact of PKU dietary management*: A key component of the PKU diet is the restrictive intake of intact protein with the majority provided from medical foods consisting of L-amino acids high in osmolality and more rapidly metabolized and excreted. What impact does this have on bone health and on gastrointestinal and renal function?
- *Women's health*: What is the impact of PKU on the menstrual cycle and on menopause?
- *Improving Metabolic Control via Gut Microbiome*: What is the impact of altering gut microbiome on improving metabolic control?

- *Puberty and PKU*: How does the pubertal transition impact metabolic control? How does shifting from parent-led to teen-led care affect treatment adherence, clinic engagement and clinical outcomes?

Eligibility of Applicants

Eligible applicants must have an advanced (e.g. PhD, MD, SW, GC, RD) or equivalent degree(s) and hold a position at an established clinical/academic/research institution. Representatives working at a for-profit industry company working on PKU are *not* eligible to apply.

Both United States and international academic institutions will be considered. Investigators from centers with a history of research in metabolic diseases are strongly encouraged to apply. Awards typically range from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for a one-year funding period.

Applicants are encouraged to use the funding to support innovative seed or pilot projects to produce preliminary data that would facilitate more substantial funding from federal agencies, foundations or corporations. All data, personnel and intellectual property must remain solely within the clinical/academic/research institution and cannot be part of a for-profit industry company for the duration of the grant award. Collaborative work among research personnel and/or academic institutions is encouraged.

Early-Stage Investigators

Researchers early in their career are encouraged to apply to the NPKUA Grant Program. Eligible candidates to be considered an early investigator must be actively affiliated with an academic health care institution and be within five years of completing their training (e.g. residency, fellowship, etc.). Applicants must have an advanced degree or equivalent and have a local primary mentor. A letter of support from the project mentor is required to be included with their application.

Application Guidelines

Applicants are invited to submit a **full proposal** via the [application portal](#). A checklist of required application criteria can be [found here](#). All application guidelines must be followed to be eligible for review. While the application portal is designed to flag any submission components that fall outside of the application guidelines, a member of the NPKUA staff will alert the applicant that their proposal is ineligible for review, and it will be removed from the application cycle. Applicants should refrain from using artificial intelligence (AI) tools other than for editorial assistance to ensure unique content.

Up to 10% of the total project budget may be allocated to institutional indirect or overhead costs. IRB or IACUC approval must be obtained prior to distribution of NPKUA funds.

Timeline:

Full proposals should be received no later than **Monday, June 15, 2026**. Award notices will be given by September 2026 with funding to begin October 1, 2026. For projects requesting greater than \$50,000, payment will be given in two milestone payments.

Each application is reviewed by the NPKUA Scientific Advisory Board and decisions are made based upon medical and scientific merit that are in line with the goals of the organization. The NPKUA Board of Directors reviews all decisions made by the Advisory Board and makes the final decision based on available resources and strategic research priorities.

Proposals will be funded by NPKUA for one year and the submission of a progress report will be required within six months after the grant has been awarded, along with goals for renewal funding consideration. A final report will be due Tuesday, December 26, 2027. Failure to submit this final report by the given deadline will disqualify the grant awardee from applying to the NPKUA research grant cycle for the following year.

NPKUA also expects grant recipients to communicate the findings of their research, regardless of outcomes, published in a scientific journal or presented at a scientific conference, so that others may benefit from their work. Any publication or presentation related to the study should be shared with the NPKUA for our reference, and acknowledgement of NPKUA funding should be included.

All proposals can be [submitted here](#). Please direct any questions to grants@npkua.org.