

September 8, 2026 Safety

Funding grants for new research into AI and teen development

OpenAI is committing \$5 million to support independent research on how generative AI affects the lives and development of young people ages 13–17.

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communities, and technology providers.

We want to build a stronger evidence base about the way teens use AI, as well as the impacts of AI on their lives, to inform development of AI products for teens and to help answer major questions facing policymakers and regulators. For example, we aim to deepen industry-wide understanding of the nuances across age and context, efficacy of safeguards and interventions, and the ways that evidence can inform implementation and evaluation. This program will fund independent research into the opportunities and challenges associated with AI use during adolescence, with a particular focus on teens' social and emotional development.

What we're funding

We welcome proposals that can deepen understanding and generate evidence relevant to current and emerging discourse, including:

- How teens use generative AI and how different patterns of use relate to developmental outcomes
- Potential impacts of AI use in teens' lives

- Technical interventions, safeguards, and design choices that can increase benefits or keep teens safer
- How effects may differ across ages, developmental stages, populations, cultures, languages, and socioeconomic contexts

We welcome interdisciplinary research involving fields such as child and adolescent development, psychology, public health, human-computer interaction, communication, sociology, anthropology, data science, and AI safety. We encourage proposals from any country, and will prioritize those from countries with significant AI adoption.

Qualitative, quantitative, experimental, observational, theoretical, participatory, and mixed-methods approaches are all eligible. Research involving teens in the design or interpretation of studies is welcome but not required.

Research priorities

We encourage submissions that relate to one or more of the following topics:

- **Emotional development and well-being:** Research on emotion regulation, resilience, identity, agency, self-esteem, and social connection.
- **Social development and relationships:** Research on friendships, family relationships, belonging, communication, empathy, social skills, and the relationship between AI and human connection.
- **Patterns, contexts, and variance across demographics:** Research on how outcomes vary by time spent, type and purpose of use, age, culture, language, socioeconomic circumstances, and other individual or contextual factors.
- **Mitigations, age-appropriate design, and policy approaches:** Research evaluating safeguards, product interventions, AI literacy, parental or educator support, and healthy-use practices.

Research involving minors

Research involving minors requires particular attention to informed consent and assent, privacy, safeguarding, data security, and the possibility that participation may expose or generate sensitive information.

Applicants proposing research involving minors must explain:

- The relevant institutional or independent ethics-review process

- How participants' privacy and data will be protected
- How researchers will respond to disclosures of harm or imminent risk
- Whether the project involves sensitive personal, behavioral, or mental-health information
- What relevant child-development, clinical, or safeguarding expertise the research team possesses
- Parental consent, where appropriate

Collecting sensitive information does not automatically make a project ineligible. However, such projects may require additional ethical review, expertise, safeguards, and time.

Application requirements

Applications should be formatted as a single-spaced Google doc. Applicants should submit:

- **Project summary:** A brief overview of the proposed research and its expected contribution, less than one page.
- **Research proposal:** No more than three pages, excluding references, addressing:
 - Research questions
 - Relevant prior research
 - Proposed methods and analysis
 - Study population and recruitment strategy, including evidence of feasibility or access
 - Expected outputs
 - Potential limitations
 - Relevance to the program's goals
- **Project plan and timeline:** Key activities, milestones, and expected completion date.
- **Budget and budget justification:** Requested funding, major cost categories, and any other committed sources of support.
- **Project dependencies:** An explanation of requirements that must be met for the research to be carried out and risks that might endanger the project's fruition.
- **Ethics and safeguarding statement:** Required for any research involving minors, sensitive information, or potentially vulnerable populations. Where relevant, proposals should explicitly reference any regulation governing research with teens and compliance strategy.
- **Team information:** Short CVs or bios for the principal investigator and key team members.
- **Independence and conflicts disclosure:** Relevant financial relationships, industry funding, or other potential conflicts of interest.

conducted in any language.

Review criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Scientific rigor: The strength and appropriateness of the research design and analysis
- Relevance: Examination of a topic relevant to current public discourse on AI
- Proposal quality: The clarity, focus, and coherence of the application
- Actionability: The potential to translate findings into guidance for models, products, safeguards, regulatory approaches, or future research
- Ethics and safeguarding: The adequacy of protections for minors and other participants
- Feasibility: Whether the project can be completed with the proposed resources and timeline
- Team expertise: The team's ability to conduct the proposed work responsibly
- Inclusion and generalizability: Attention to diverse populations, contexts, cultures, and experiences
- Complementarity: The extent to which the work adds to existing evidence and complements OpenAI's internal research agenda
- Independence and credibility: The project's ability to produce trustworthy findings regardless of whether those findings are favorable to providers of AI products

Preference may be given to research involving ChatGPT, interdisciplinary teams, underrepresented populations or regions, and projects capable of producing clear evidence that can inform near- or medium-term policy and regulatory decisions.

Final grants may be subject to the grantee's execution of a grant agreement, award letter, certification, acknowledgment, or other documentation setting forth applicable terms and conditions. Grantees must accept and comply with any such requirements as a condition of receiving grant funding.

How to apply

Submissions are open today through October 6, 2026. A panel of internal experts and advisors will review applications on a rolling basis and notify selected proposals on or before November 13, 2026. Follow this [link](#) to apply.

FAQ

Q: What are the expected outputs?

A: Every funded project will be expected to provide OpenAI with a final report describing:

- The research question and methods
- Results and supporting evidence
- Limitations and sources of uncertainty
- Recommendations for policymakers, regulators, technology providers, or other stakeholders, where supported by the findings

To ensure research is progressing, we require an interim update on research progress and, where appropriate, an indication of early research findings in Q1 2027.

We are prioritizing research that can advance public dialogue on these critical topics. We strongly encourage researchers to make their findings publicly available through a peer-reviewed publication, preprint, public report, or similar format. However, publication will not be a condition of receiving funding.

Q: What are the eligibility criteria?

A: To be eligible, applicants must be:

- 18 or older
- Affiliated with a research institution or organization, and/or significant experience relevant to child or adolescent development, well-being, human-computer interaction, AI impacts, or a closely related field

Note that we are seeking to fund research rather than for-profit initiatives, so we will not prioritize for-profit organizations at this time.

Q: What budget is available per project?

A: We will award individual research grants up to \$1 million and totaling up to \$5 million.

Q: Can grant funds be used to cover overhead or indirect costs?

A: A maximum of 10% of each project's grant can support overhead or indirect costs.

Q: Can grant funds be used to support student, graduate student, or post-doc involvement in research?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the project timeline?

provide final results in a shorter timeframe. We ask that a working draft (i.e., suitable for discussion at a small conference) be provided within 12 months of receiving funds.

Q: Can multiple institutions collaborate on a proposal?

A: Yes.

Q: Are these grants funded by OpenAI Foundation or OpenAI Group PBC?

A: The grants are funded and administered by OpenAI Group PBC.

Q: Who can I contact for questions about this grant?

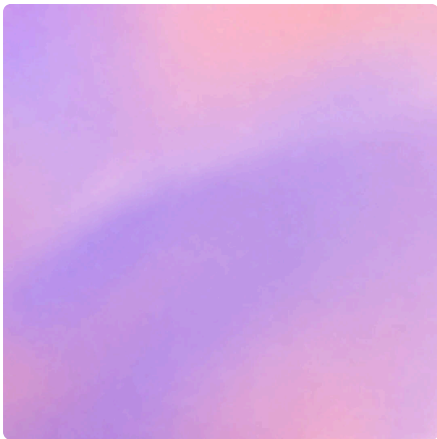
A: Email collaborativeresearch@openai.com. Note that we will not be providing status updates for individual applications that are not selected.

2026 Community

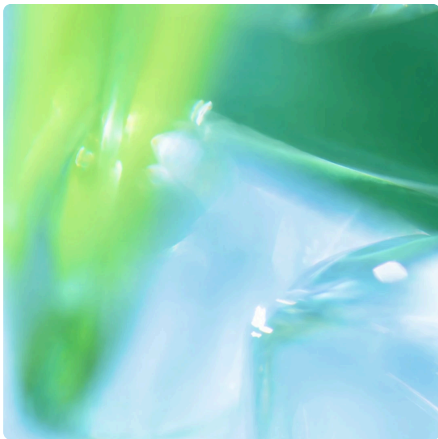
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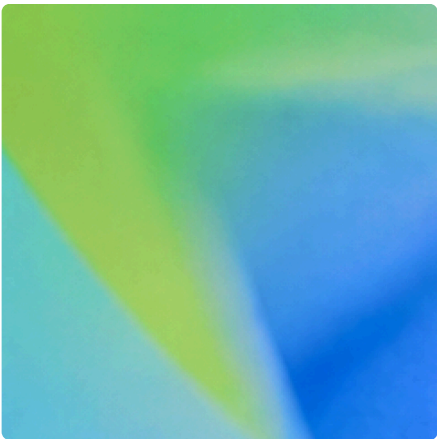
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