Grant Cycle Application Process

2026 Request for Applications (Opens May 18, 2026)

Application Process (Two Stages)

Global Lyme Alliance's (GLA) grant application process consists of two stages:

I. **Letter of Intent (LOI):** Applicants submit a 1-page overview of their proposed project, using the provided template, along with a biosketch and a single budget entry. LOIs will be reviewed for feasibility and programmatic alignment before invitation to the full proposal stage.

   - **Accepting LOIs:** May 18, 2026, 12:00 am ET
   - **LOI Deadline:** June 15, 2026, 11:59 pm ET

II. **Full Proposal (by invitation only):** Invited applicants will submit more detailed information, including a 6-page proposal, detailed budget, and supporting materials. Full proposals will be reviewed by GLA's Scientific Advisory Board, following a process modeled after the National Institutes of Health, to identify and support projects of the highest scientific merit and potential for impact. The Full Proposal deadline is **September 14, 2026, 11:59 pm ET*.**

All LOIs must be submitted through the GLA Application Portal.

Funding Mechanisms

This year, GLA is introducing **two** distinct funding mechanisms:

I. **Research Grant**
Designed to support impactful and innovative research initiatives that address critical gaps related to the understanding, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of Lyme nd

Designed to support investigators at the beginning of their independe
careers, with the goal of advancing and retaining new leaders in the d
other tick-borne disease research. Applicants may request **up to $90**
direct costs for one to two years.

Program Description

GLA is the leading 501(c)(3) dedicated to combating Lyme and other tick-
through innovative research, awareness, and empowering the patient voice. GLA supports high-quality, evidence-based, and data-driven research that advances scientific knowledge and contributes to improving patient outcomes.

Research Priorities

GLA prioritizes research that accelerates the development of innovative diagnostics, elucidates disease mechanisms, and advances novel treatment strategies for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. A particular emphasis is placed on understanding and addressing post-treatment and chronic manifestations of Lyme disease.

2026 GLA Research Topic Areas

1. Diagnostics

GLA supports research aimed at developing accurate diagnostic tools for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases. Priority areas include:

- Early detection methods that improve specificity and sensitivity, particularly in differentiating active infection from past exposure, and in identifying patients who may not present with hallmark signs such as erythema migrans lesions.
- Biomarker discovery for identification of infection-associated chronic manifestations of Lyme disease, including the diagnosis of individuals with post-treatment Lyme disease symptoms (PTLDS).
- Imaging, molecular, and serological approaches for disease identification and progression monitoring.

2. Disease Mechanisms

GLA seeks to advance understanding of the biological processes that drive infection, immune dysfunction, and neuroinflammation in Lyme disease and PTLDS. Areas of interest include:

- The immunopathogenesis of Lyme disease, including host immune responses and mechanisms of immune evasion by *Borrelia burgdorferi*.

studies.

3. Novel Treatment Strategies

GLA prioritizes research into innovative therapeutic approaches aimed at [illegible]ent outcomes, with a focus on:

- Drug repurposing and novel antimicrobial strategies.
- Therapies aimed at mitigating dysregulated immune responses.
- Precision medicine approaches that tailor treatments based on patient-specific factors like genetics and immune profiles.
- Strategies designed to reduce infection risk or mitigate disease following tick exposure.

4. Epidemiologic Studies

GLA supports epidemiologic research to improve the understanding of Lyme and tick-borne disease prevalence, risk factors, and disease burden across diverse populations. Key areas include:

- Population-based studies to assess the incidence, geographic distribution, and long-term outcomes of Lyme and other tick-borne diseases, including post-treatment and chronic manifestations.
- Identification of environmental and genetic factors contributing to disease susceptibility and severity.
- Investigations into co-infections with other tick-borne pathogens and their impact on disease progression and treatment response.

5. Biobanks and Sample Repositories

GLA recognizes the critical need for well-characterized biological samples to advance Lyme disease research. Efforts are focused on:

- Establishing and expanding biobanks that include well-annotated patient and control samples, such as blood and cerebrospinal fluid to support diagnostic and therapeutic research.
- Developing standardized protocols for sample collection, processing, and storage to ensure data quality and reproducibility across studies.
- Facilitating data-sharing and interdisciplinary collaboration by integrating biobanked samples with clinical, molecular, and genetic datasets for comprehensive analyses.

GLA encourages interdisciplinary collaborations and the use of cutting-edge technologies to drive transformative discoveries in Lyme disease research.

Program Eligibility

Applicants qualify for the Early Career Research Grant if they: 1) Are withi
completing their terminal research degree or clinical training at the time of
Hold, or have a confirmed offer for, an independent academic or research
Have not previously served as PI on a major independent research award
support a sustained research program (e.g., NIH R01 or equivalent). The
affect eligibility: NIH R21, R03, or K-series awards; pilot, seed, or explorat
fellowships or mentored awards; institutional or departmental funding; sma
grants. Extensions to the 10-year eligibility window may be granted for family caregiving, medical leave, disability, military service, or other significant career interruptions.

Project Length

All awards are limited to a 2-year project period and stated maximum budget unless otherwise discussed.

2026 Timeline*

Anticipated Grant Start Date: February 15, 2027 (pending execution of grant agreements).

**Timeline is subject to change depending on application volume or other circumstances*

LOI Instructions

Please download and complete the LOI template available here. LOIs must be one page, single-spaced, using Arial 11-point font with 0.5-inch margins. The following sections must be included:

- **Significance:** Briefly describe the research problem, its importance, and the gap in knowledge or practice the project addresses.
- **Innovation:** Highlight what is novel about the concept, approach, or methodology.
- **Hypothesis:** State the central hypothesis driving the proposed work.
- **Specific Aims:** List one to three focused aims that will test the hypothesis.

- **Short- and Long-term Impact:** Describe the expected impact of the
  near term and how this will enable longer-term advances in the field
- **Relevance to 2026 GLA Research Topic Areas:** Describe alignmer
  more specified priority areas.
- **Translational Relevance:** Explain how the work could ultimately cor
  improvements in patient outcomes.
- **Personnel Qualifications:** Brief overview of expertise relevant to th
- **Budget:** Total direct costs for entire project period (no budget justification is needed at this stage).
- **Duration of Project:** 1 or 2 years.

All LOIs must adhere to these guidelines for consideration and be submitted through the GLA Application Portal.

GLA will accept proposals with multiple PIs. However, one individual must be designated as the contact PI, who will serve as the primary point of communication. If selected for full application and funded, it will be awarded to the contact PI's institution, which will be responsible for issuing subawards to the other PIs, as appropriate.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact GLA at grants@gla.org with any questions or technical issues well in advance of the submission deadline. GLA may not be able to accommodate inquiries received on or after the submission deadline.

Full Proposal Instructions

GLA conducts a programmatic review of LOIs to identify those with the strongest alignment to the 2026 Research Topic Areas and the greatest potential for feasibility and impact. Invited applicants must submit applications through the **GLA Application Portal.** Word, PDF, or Excel files are accepted for each section.

I. Abstract

- Lay-language abstract: Describe your proposed project in ≤ 200 words using nontechnical language and avoiding the use of acronyms (i.e., at a level that a ninth-grade student would understand).
- Technical abstract: Describe your proposed project in ≤ 200 words using language commonly found in peer-reviewed publications and NIH grant proposals.

II. Biographical Sketch

List all active and pending support (government, private, institutional, etc.) key personnel, whether related to this proposal or not.

IV. Project Description

The total length must not exceed **6 pages** (excluding abstracts, references appendices). **Project descriptions exceeding 6 pages will not be reviewed** organize your project description in the following sequence. Suggested page limits are flexible, but the total must not exceed 6 pages:

- **Background, Hypothesis, and Specific Aims** (~1-2 page)
- **Significance, Innovation, and Short- and Long-term Impact** (~1 page)
- **Approach** (~3-4 pages)
  - Previous Work/Preliminary Data
  - Scientific rationale and technical details (e.g., experimental design, controls, methods, instrumentation, assays, analysis)
  - Anticipated results/pitfalls/alternatives

Required Format: Applications must be in English, with single-spaced text using Arial 11 or larger point font, and 0.5-inch margins.

V. References

List of references, uploaded in a separate field during submission

VI. Budget

Provide a detailed budget and justification, including staff needs and itemized supplies. If applicable, include subaward budgets with appropriate justification. Facilities and Administrative (F&A) costs (indirect costs) are **limited to 10% of direct costs** and are added on top of direct costs. F&A costs are not included within the direct cost limits. (*Example: $100,000 direct costs + $10,000 F&A costs (10%) = $110,000 total funds requested).* For proposals over one year, include a budget for each year.

Permissible direct costs include:

- PI and non-administrative staff compensation (salary, wages, stipends, with fringe benefits). Salary support is subject to the current NIH salary cap.
- Supplies and materials, as itemized in the budget.
- Expenses for attending nationally recognized scientific/medical conferences to present findings from the funded project.
- Costs associated with publication from the GLA funded project in scientific peer-reviewed journals.

- Membership dues, books, journals, and tuition.

All awarded funds must be used solely for the purposes described in the a
application and budget. Note that budgets are sometimes reduced below t
requested based on availability of funds and the scientific and programma
proposals.

VII. Appendix

Career Development & Independence Statement (Early Career Research Grant applicants only): Briefly describe your career trajectory, current stage of independence, and how this award will support your transition to research independence.

Letter of Institutional Support (Early Career Research Grant applicants only): A letter from a department chair, division chief, or institutional official confirming the applicant's position, commitment of protected research time, and access to necessary resources and infrastructure to successfully complete the proposed project.

Letters of support and other material: If applicable, include letters of support from collaborators describing their contribution and commitment to the study. The applicant is also encouraged to share PDF versions of any prior publications whose findings are directly relevant to the submitted research proposal. Materials may be combined into one PDF file to facilitate uploading.

VIII. Vertebrate Animals Statement

When the proposed research includes vertebrate animals, describe the involvement of live vertebrate animals according to the following criteria: (1) description of proposed procedures involving animals, including species, strains, ages, sex, and total number to be used; (2) justifications for the use of animals versus alternative models and for the appropriateness of the species proposed; (3) interventions to minimize discomfort, distress, pain and injury; and (4) justification for euthanasia method if NOT consistent with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals.

IX. Protection for Human Subjects Statement

For research that involves human subjects but does not involve one of the categories of research that are exempt under 45 CFR Part 46, describe the justification for involvement of human subjects and the proposed protections from research risk relating to their participation according to the following five review criteria: 1) risk to subjects; 2) adequacy of protection against risks; 3) potential benefits to the subjects and others; 4) importance of the knowledge to be gained; and 5) data and safety monitoring for clinical trials.

X. Biohazards Statement

A statement and assurances regarding potential biohazards and safeguar
included.

XI. Authentication of Key Biological and Chemica s

If applicable, briefly describe methods to ensure the identity and validity of key biological and/or chemical resources (maximum one page). These include reagents or samples that may vary between labs or over time and are crucial to the research, such as cell lines, antibodies, and patient samples. Standard lab reagents like buffers or growth media need not be included.

XII. Signatures

The signature page must be completed before submission. Signatures from the PI and an authorized institutional representative are required.

Full Proposal Review Process

Applications will be reviewed by members of GLA's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) using the following criteria:

1. **Significance.** Does the project address a key problem or barrier in the field? Will the outcomes advance scientific knowledge, tools, treatments, or clinical practice?
2. **Innovation.** Does the project propose novel ideas, methods, or tools that shift current research or clinical practice? Does it offer improvements or new applications?
3. **Impact.** Proposed research should generate high-impact data with clear potential to advance scientific knowledge, therapeutic development, or clinical care. Projects must demonstrate how outcomes could improve patient health in the short or long term. Priority will be given to studies that:
    - Provide a strong foundation for future research or funding;
    - Address critical gaps in knowledge or treatment;
    - Have translational potential to improve patient outcomes.
4. **Investigators.** Are the PI and team qualified and appropriately experienced? Do collaborative teams have complementary expertise and sound leadership?
5. **Approach.** Are the strategies and methods appropriate to achieve the aims? Are challenges, alternatives, and success metrics addressed?

SAB members will score these sections using a scale of 1-9, with 1 being the highest score (exceptional) and 9 the lowest (poor). This standardized scoring system allows reviewers to

Animals. The committee will evaluate the proposed use of live animals ba
procedures described, justification for choosing animals over alternative m s
to minimize discomfort and pain, and the euthanasia method if not in line v
Guidelines.

Budget. The committee will review the proposed budget for clarity and ali
project goals. This includes evaluating staff compensation, supplies, and a
budgets. The budget should reflect the appropriate use of requested funds
project outcomes.

Biohazards and Authentication of Key Resources. Reviewers will assess any potential hazards posed by materials or procedures to research personnel and the environment, as well as the proposed protective measures. Additionally, for projects involving key biological or chemical resources, the review will include the adequacy of plans to authenticate and ensure the validity of these resources.

For Administrative and Scientific Inquiries Contact: grants@gla.org

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