

Innovator Awards

The Innovator Awards Program enables researchers worldwide to test ideas and collaborate to advance the understanding of IBD.

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The Kenneth Rainin Foundation believes that early support for innovative ideas can lead to improvements in preventing, predicting, diagnosing and treating Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD). Our Health grantmaking enables researchers worldwide to test ideas, gather and share data, and collaborate to advance the understanding of IBD. In 2022, we consolidated our Innovator Awards and Synergy Awards into one grant program—the Innovator Awards.

Innovator Awards support individual research projects with grants of up to \$150,000 and collaborative projects involving multiple investigators with grants of up to \$300,000. Grantees who demonstrate significant progress are eligible for up to two years of additional support.

Click to expand the sections below to learn more about the Innovator Awards and how to apply, or explore [frequently asked questions](#).



Dr. Aida Habtezion collaborating in her lab. Photo credit: Lori Halloran

Health Grantmaking Approach

Funding Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Innovation
- Scientific merit
- Investigator capability to execute the project

Eligibility

Researchers

- Researchers from any scientific discipline worldwide are eligible for funding.
- Typically, the researchers we fund hold advanced degrees (MD, PhD or the equivalent) and academic positions at universities, medical centers or research institutions.

- Innovator Awards may only have one Principal Investigator, and funding is awarded to their home institution. Additional investigators may be included as Co-Investigators, and the lead institution can create subawards.
- Postdocs are not eligible to apply as a Principal Investigator.
- Current and former Rainin Foundation grantees are eligible to apply.
- Researchers may submit multiple proposals, as long as there are distinct aims and objectives for each proposal.

Institutions

- All nonprofit institutions must be classified as “not a private foundation” under Section 509(a)(3).
- If a proposal from a nonprofit institution outside of the United States is ultimately recommended for funding, the institution will be required to undergo an Equivalency Determination process. The Rainin Foundation contracts with NGOsource to manage this process. Institutions outside of the United States do not need to provide any documentation during the two-stage application process.
- For-profit institutions must demonstrate that their proposed project furthers the Foundation’s charitable mission of advancing biomedical research.
- The Foundation may upon occasion make grants to government and public agencies, as well as to independent projects that have a qualified tax-exempt fiscal sponsor.
- Institutions can submit more than one proposal at a time for the same or different Principal Investigator.

The Foundation Does Not Fund:

- Direct assistance to individuals or individual sponsorships
- Sports, athletic events or league sponsorships
- Advertising or promotional sponsorships
- Deficits or retroactive funding
- Fraternal organizations
- Organizations that discriminate based on religion, race, sexual orientation or gender

Use Of Human And Animal Subjects

Grant recipients using human or animal subjects must provide documentation of approval from the appropriate review committee within 90 days of award start date

Application Process



All grant application materials must be submitted using the Foundation's online application system during the grant submission window. You can [preview our grant application template and questions](#). Please note that these questions are subject to change and what you are asked during the grant submission window may differ slightly from what is shown in the preview.

Applying for an Innovator Award is a two-step process. Please refer to the Awards Calendar below for this year's schedule.

1. In stage one, applicants will submit a Letter of Inquiry, which includes:
 - A brief description of your innovative idea and the approach you will take to address your research questions.
 - Project budget
 - A biosketch for the Principal Investigator and any Co-Investigators. Applicants can use the [NIH biosketch template](#) and [instructions](#), or any other format they prefer.
2. Full Proposals are *by invitation only*. They consist of:
 - An expanded description of project objectives, methodologies and milestones to test the innovative idea.
 - A detailed project budget and disclosure of other financial support.
 - Outlined goals, which should be achievable within one year. Innovator Award recipients may be eligible for up to two years of additional funding based on their progress.
 - Other proposal abstract(s) and specific aims if you have any current funding for projects that may be perceived as overlapping with your Innovator Award proposal.

If a proposal has been recommended for funding, nonprofit institutions outside of the United States will be required to undergo

the [Equivalency Determination process](#) with NGOsource before a grant can be awarded.

Awards Calendar



Letters of Inquiry (LOIs)

August 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024

Letters of Inquiry are due by 5 PM PST on September 30, 2024

Full Proposals (by invitation only)

January 6, 2025 – February 3, 2025

Full proposals are due by 5 PM PST on February 3, 2025

Awards Announcement

May 1, 2025

Grant Period

June 1, 2025 – May 31, 2026

Budget Guidelines



Innovator Award Letters of Inquiry must include a budget. All necessary research costs can be budgeted including personnel, reagents, supplies and equipment. Institutions may use any format they'd like, or [download this budget template](#). See our [Innovator Awards FAQs](#) for more information.

Budget Amount

- Innovator Awards provide up to \$150,000 USD for projects by individual researchers and up to \$300,000 USD for collaborative projects involving multiple researchers.

- The budget must reflect the total amount requested, which may include up to 10% for indirect costs.
- The budget caps of \$150,000 and \$300,000 USD, respectively, include all indirect costs.

Principal Investigator Salary

- The maximum amount allowed for the Principal Investigator's salary is \$10,000 USD, including fringe benefits.
- If Co-Investigator(s) are listed on the proposal, the maximum salary support for each of them is \$10,000 USD, including fringe benefits.
- The maximum salary support for all Investigators combined is \$30,000 USD total. This maximum value does not apply to other research personnel (e.g., post-doctoral fellows, research associates, students) to be funded by the award.

Indirect Costs

- The maximum indirect or overhead costs that can be requested are 10% of total direct costs.
- Once a grant has been awarded, funds cannot be transferred from direct costs to cover indirect or overhead costs, even if the indirect cost was less than the maximum allowed.

Travel To The Innovations Symposium

- The Rainin Foundation's annual Innovations Symposium is a two- to three-day meeting held each year in July.
- The Principal Investigator is encouraged to attend the Innovations Symposium in the year of their award. Grantees may be invited to present their work to the event attendees.
- Grantees are also encouraged to invite a trainee from each funded project to attend the Innovations Symposium. Early career scientists have important contributions to offer to the field, and their careers will benefit from networking with field leaders at the Symposium.
- Transportation costs for the PI and a trainee to attend the Innovations Symposium should be included in the proposal budget.
- Eligible transportation costs include economy/coach airfare and ground transportation. The Rainin Foundation will cover the hotel expenses for grantees and designated trainees.
- Innovator Award funding cannot be used to cover travel to attend other scientific meetings.

Award Period

The award period is 12 months, starting June 1.

Reporting



Progress Reports

- Mid-year output and outcome data will be submitted through Researchfish, our data reporting portal.
- Mid-year financial reports will be submitted through GivingData, our online grants management system.
- Grantees whose projects are eligible for renewed funding will make a presentation to the Foundation's Scientific Advisory Board after submitting a mid-year financial report to GivingData and output and outcome data to Researchfish.

Final Reports

- Final output and outcomes data will be submitted through Researchfish.
- Grantees will provide a final financial report to the Foundation using GivingData, our online grants management system. The report is due 60 days after the end of the award period or by any authorized extension.

Curious if your research project fits within our Health grantmaking priorities?

- Visit our IBD microsite to explore the research areas and researchers we have supported.
- Check out our Health Program Snapshot to learn about our goals, strategies, tactics and the outcomes we hope to achieve.
- Email our Health Program Staff to discuss eligibility, research scope and the grant process.

The Kenneth Rainin Foundation enhances quality of life by championing the arts, promoting early childhood literacy, and supporting research to cure chronic disease.

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