THE MICHAEL J. FOX FOUNDATION
FOR PARKINSON'S RESEARCH

Parkinson's Disease Therapeutics Pipeline Program

Request for Applications

Fast Facts

- Funding to accelerate *pre-clinical and clinical development* of *disease-modifying or symptomatic interventions* for Parkinson's disease
- Program additionally supports *integration and analysis of decision-informing biomarker tools*
- Funding ranges of *$1M-$5M for 2-3 years* contingent on program scope and development stage
- Open to *industry and academic + industry partnerships* to foster clearer paths to commercialization; eligibility exemptions for *academic-led projects* in certain cases (see overview details)
- *Pre-proposals accepted on a rolling basis* for rapid initial exchange with MJFF on proposed therapeutic ideas
- *Multiple annual review cycles* for applicants invited to submit a full proposal
- *Office hours are available* to address questions and partnerships after invite to the full proposal round

BACKGROUND

Parkinson's disease (PD) affects nearly 1 million people in the US and over 6 million worldwide, with expected increases over the coming decades. Individuals living with PD experience a wide array of motor and non-motor symptoms that evolve over time and significantly impact quality of life. While current treatments provide some limited symptom relief, they are incomplete and often come with complications. There are no approved therapies that alter the progression of PD.

The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research (MJFF) is dedicated to accelerating the development of improved therapies and a cure for PD through an aggressively funded research agenda. A key pillar of our agenda is to foster more robust and diverse treatment pipelines for PD by advancing promising therapeutic development through a combination of targeted grant funding, strategic partnership and access to research tools, data and patient-centered resources.

PROGRAM GOAL

The Parkinson's Disease Therapeutics Pipeline Program (TPP) is MJFF's flagship funding initiative to directly support and accelerate development of therapies for PD. We prioritize opportunities where our funding can advance a therapeutic intervention by generating evidence that meaningfully informs critical development milestones for PD. This reduces uncertainty and enables next-stage development and investment.

TPP funding supports activities across four important dimensions that define the scope and resource requirements of submitted proposals. Applicants should propose work that aligns these dimensions with the status and development path requirements of the proposed therapy.

Therapeutic intent

- Development of therapies seeking to *slow, stop or prevent PD progression* by targeting underlying disease biology
- Development of therapies seeking to *improve PD symptoms* and reduce resulting physical, emotional and social impact on daily functioning and quality of life.

Therapeutic modality

- Development of novel *pharmacological* (small molecules) or *biological* (biologic, gene therapy) approaches
- *Non-pharmacological strategies* including surgical approaches, neuromodulation and other technology-enabled therapeutics that have compelling, existing data from human studies with a strong potential for future clinical adoption if successful.
- *Repurposed therapies* that include clear and robust biomarker-enabled and/or clinically meaningful outcome-informed testing strategies.

Stage of development

- *Preclinical-stage activities* including hit identification, lead optimization, mechanistic studies and other clinical trial-enabling activities.
- *Clinical-stage activities* including evaluation of safety, biological activity and early signals of efficacy in people with PD.

Biomarker tool integration

- *Preclinical assessment of biomarkers* that directly support translational readiness and future clinical trial design of a specific therapeutic approach, including measures of therapeutic activity to guide human dose selection and other important clinical development planning needs.
- *Prospective integration of biomarkers* into a new clinical program OR *retrospective analyses of biomarker outcomes* from an ongoing or completed trial of a potentially promising therapeutic approach that can confirm therapeutic mechanism of action

by assessing target/pathway engagement, confirm dose selection, support patient stratification and enable other go/no-go decisions for further development.

Program Exclusions

As the primary focus of TPP is to advance new therapeutic interventions, MJFF will NOT consider proposal submissions to this program that focus on the following areas:

- Early-stage target discovery (e.g., genomic/transcriptomic analyses)
- Validation studies using tool compounds or manipulation methods that lack a clear and viable path to therapeutic development
- Standalone biomarker discovery or therapy platform development without an existing application to a specific PD-relevant therapeutic program
- Simple reformulation of an approved therapy without strong rationale for addressing a current unmet patient need
- Evaluation of dietary and other nutritional supplements given challenges in defining mechanism, establishing interpretable biomarker strategies and limited regulatory pathway clarity which are key pillars of this funding program
- Natural history studies or similar exploratory clinical data collection

PROGRAM CRITERIA

MJFF will prioritize proposals that demonstrate strong potential to advance therapeutic development and improve outcomes for people with PD. Competitive applications will address the following key criteria:

Clear Therapeutic Rationale and Differentiation

The proposed therapeutic target, mechanism and intervention have a strong scientific rationale and potential for offering meaningful clinical benefit to people with PD and is differentiated from existing or emerging approaches. For example, a mechanistically distinct or therapeutically novel approach to targeting disease biology vs other competing approaches in development; or a therapy providing potentially significant symptomatic improvement over existing therapy.

Clear Development Strategy

The proposal demonstrates a clear path from the current stage of development to the next critical milestone within the project period, and how work will generate actionable insights that reduce uncertainty and advance the program.

Clear Biomarker Strategy

The proposal incorporates biomarkers in a manner appropriate to the stage of development and therapeutic intent, and that function as tools for meaningful development decision-making rather than exploratory endpoints. Applicants will be asked to define a clear context of use (as defined by the FDA Biomarkers, EndpointS and other Tools [BEST] criteria), hypothesis and analysis plan for any biomarkers proposed. Proposals for clinical-stage symptomatic and non-pharmacological interventions may emphasize efficacy, functional outcomes, and comparative effectiveness (e.g., versus standard of care) to demonstrate meaningful patient benefit and support further development or adoption. While biomarkers may be included where relevant, they are not required if the study is designed to generate decision-enabling evidence through clinically meaningful outcomes.

Clear Catalytic Role of MJFF Funding

Applicants demonstrate how MJFF support will complement and leverage existing or other planned funding sources and accelerate progress toward key milestones. As supplemental funding is not usually offered, MJFF expects funded grantees to seek additional and future investment to maintain program momentum.

Clear Patient-Centered Thinking

Clinical-stage proposals incorporate patient-relevant outcomes and patient input.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

MJFF funding is intentionally catalytic, aiming to de-risk promising therapeutic programs, accelerate progress and increase the likelihood of attracting follow-on investment from external partners required for full clinical and commercial development. We prioritize opportunities to complement and share the costs of development with like-minded partners with a current or new commitment to PD. Application scope, funding levels and duration are determined by the developmental stage of the proposed therapeutic and may be discussed with MJFF staff if invited to submit a full proposal.

The table below provides general guidance on scope, budget and duration based on developmental stage. However, final decisions are contingent on completion and incorporation of reviewer feedback and discussion with MJFF staff and may differ from these amounts.

Development Stage	Allowed Scope	Maximum Budget	Maximum Duration
Early preclinical discovery	Activities that support identification of a credible therapeutic lead with sufficient rationale and tractability for continued development; must have a clear biological target already defined	$1M	2 years
Development candidate selection	Activities that enable selection of a therapeutic development candidate suitable for IND-enabling studies; must have a lead candidate already selected for optimization	$3M	2 years
IND-enabling studies	Activities that generate a non-clinical data package sufficient for regulatory submission and approval to initiate first-in-human testing; must have a development candidate already selected to move forward	$5M	2 years
Early clinical development	Studies designed to demonstrate clinical proof-of-concept informing future advancement, partnering and larger-scale clinical development or clinical adoption; may also include biomarker analyses in active or recently completed trials or early clinical studies to assess therapy-associated Biomarker signals in PD-relevant populations	$5M	3 years

Additional Scope and Budget Considerations

- MJFF funding should be prioritized for activities that help reduce uncertainty for future development for PD. As such, general costs such as CMC or other PD non-specific basic costs of therapy development are generally excluded.
- Training and fellowship activities are not supported through this program
- Budgets include direct and indirect costs. For academic and for-profit institutions, no more than 15% or 10%, respectively, may go to indirect costs. Additional details about MJFF's indirect cost policy can be found in the Application Guidelines and FAQ.

DEADLINES & REVIEW SCHEDULE

TPP works in two stages with the goal of offering frequent opportunities for applicants to propose novel and promising PD therapeutics:

1. Applicants may submit a pre-proposal application at any time via our MJFF Grant Portal. Pre-proposals will be reviewed by MJFF within three weeks of submission. This stage is your first and best opportunity to determine if MJFF is the right partner for you.
2. Applicants whose pre-proposal is selected for further consideration may submit a full proposal for the next formal review cycle (see dates below). MJFF staff will work with applicants to define the most flexible and fastest option for review. Invited applicants will have the opportunity to consult with MJFF on proposal development. Funding decisions will be communicated within three months of full proposal submission.

Pre-proposal submission period	Full Proposal Due Dates	Funding Decision Announced
June 27 – August 14	October 9, 2025	January 2026
August 15 – October 16	December 11, 2025	March 2026
October 17 – December 31	February 22, 2026	May 2026
January 1 – February 26	April 23, 2026	July 2026
February 27 – April 30	June 25, 2026	September 2026

Pre-proposal submission period (continued)	Full Proposal Due Dates (continued)	Funding Decision Announced (continued)
May 1 – July 10	August 20, 2026	November 2026
July 11 – September 18	October 30, 2026	January 2027
September 19 – November 27	January 8, 2027	March 2027

Applicants may submit multiple, unique therapeutic pre-proposals but should NOT submit multiple pre-proposals supporting different stages or aspects of the same therapeutic development program. Applicants may also re-submit a revised pre-proposal that addresses prior feedback provided by MJFF, if applicable.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicant eligibility for TPP is aligned to the type of work proposed and the pathway required for development. In most cases, applicants should be from *industry or an academic team working in collaboration with a dedicated industry partner*. A committed industry partner is one that has a defined role in development of the intervention such as making a significant financial contribution, owning intellectual property rights or having responsibility for downstream advancement. *Academic teams without a committed industry partner may propose certain clinical-stage symptomatic therapy studies* if these involve use of existing therapies with the intent of informing potential for PD and possible clinical care adoption. Applicants developing a novel symptomatic therapy (regardless of development stage) will need to follow the standard industry or academic-industry collaboration eligibility requirements.

Applications are accepted from the following organization types:

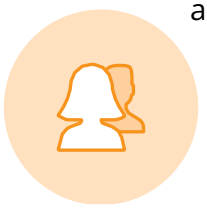
- U.S. and non-U.S. biotechnology/pharmaceutical/medical device companies, or other publicly or privately held for-profit entities.
- U.S. and non-U.S. public and private non-profit entities, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, laboratories, units of state and local governments, and eligible agencies of the federal government in collaboration with biotechnology/pharmaceutical/medical device companies, or other publicly or privately held for-profit entities.

MJFF encourages the inclusion of researchers who span career stages. Early career investigators (within 1-7 years of first independent appointment or equivalent) may apply and serve as Principal Investigator (PI). Post-doctoral fellows may serve as Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI).

BIOSAMPLE REQUESTS

Investigators are encouraged to leverage MJFF-sponsored biospecimen and cell line collections for their studies. MJFF staff can assist with MJFF's biosample process at both the pre-proposal and full proposal stage. To review MJFF's available biosample collections, refer to the MJFF biospecimen website and biorepository inventory catalogue.

Investigators should indicate their intention to leverage MJFF's biosamples within their preproposal. If invited to submit a full proposal, a formal biosample request will be reviewed in parallel. Requests to access MJFF-sponsored biosample collection(s) without seeking MJFF funding support are welcome to apply through our Access to Biosamples and Data programs. Investigators should contact resources@michaeljfox.org to learn about the application process.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)

In pursuit of our mission to accelerate the development of better treatments and a cure for Parkinson's disease, MJFF aims to support a rigorous research agenda reflecting a wide and diverse range of perspectives on Parkinson's disease and carried out in diverse populations. Diversity may refer to characteristics including, but not limited to, race, religion, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic circumstance, nationality, geographic background, ability and disability, political ideology and age. Parkinson's is a complex problem; the more angles from which we attack, the greater the chances of finding innovative scientific solutions to benefit everyone living with the disease.

As such:

+ MJFF strongly encourages applications from a wide and diverse range of investigators, including those who identify as members of groups historically underrepresented in the research enterprise.

- Because research shows that diverse and inclusive teams often outperform homogeneous ones, we ask applicants to share information about the composition of the team or lab that will carry out the proposed work.
- Proposed work should seek wherever possible to include relevant diversity, such as inclusion of sex/gender and genetic ancestry in preclinical studies and inclusive recruitment and retention as well as engagement of historically underrepresented groups in clinical studies.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Application Guidelines provide general guidance on applying for funding from MJFF, though the RFA always supersedes information contained in the Application Guidelines.

MJFF has an Open Science Policy which governs research outputs (such as preprints, journal articles, data, code, and software) resulting from MJFF-funded work. This policy includes specific rules, timing, and format for the return of those research outputs and requires them to be shared openly, to be free to access, and with persistent identifiers.

Grantees are required to provide proof of compliance with this policy (i.e., providing a link to the data in an open repository no later than submission of the first journal manuscript based on the data), and future funding will be contingent upon adherence. Please refer to the link above for more detailed information or contact openscience@michaeljfox.org.

MJFF requires that the Principal Investigator be the primary applicant (i.e., the person who initiates and takes primary responsibility for the application). All application-related correspondence will be sent to the Principal Investigator.

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE APPLICATION PROCESS OR PROJECT SUITABILITY FOR THIS CALL FOR APPLICATIONS, PLEASE EMAIL GRANTS@MICHAELJFOX.ORG.

Thank you for your interest in collaborating with MJFF and your commitment to the Parkinson's community.