



## Request for Letters of Intent

### Collaborative Research Development Grant – *Microsoft AI for Health*

#### 2026 Grantees

##### Purpose

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance is requesting Letters of Intent for the 2026 Collaborative Research Development Grant in partnership with Microsoft AI for Health (CRDG-AI). The purpose of this grantmaking program is to provide funds for ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers research projects using AI or machine learning that may involve several investigators within one institution or collaborations between groups in multiple institutions. Interdisciplinary collaborations are encouraged.

For this opportunity, OCRA is partnering with [Microsoft AI for Health](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/ai/ai-for-health), a philanthropic program at Microsoft, which offers access to advanced Microsoft Azure cloud computing and collaboration with data science experts for nonprofits, academia, and researchers working on challenges in the area of health, including ovarian cancer. Investigators funded through this grant opportunity have access to support from Microsoft in the form of Azure computing credits, and in-kind data science support. This in-kind support from Microsoft will be in addition to the financial support from OCRA. For more information, follow this link: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/ai/ai-for-health>. For FAQs regarding this partnership between Microsoft and OCRA, please look under the Collaborative Research Development Grant section of the FAQs found here: <https://ocrahope.org/research/for-grantees/grant-application-faq/>.

##### Eligibility and Selection Criteria

1. This is a collaborative grant and therefore requires a team of researchers. The Principal Investigator (one Principal Investigator (PI) must be selected and there may only be one PI) and other lead investigators must have full-time faculty appointments in a school of medicine or public health or recognized non-profit scientific research facility. They should not currently be in a training program. International collaborations are welcome.
2. At least one key investigator must be a physician with expertise in ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers.
3. Funding is only available to accredited non-profit universities/colleges, non-profit research hospitals, or a recognized non-profit scientific research facility. OCRA does not offer funding to any for-profit entities, consulting companies, or non-profits who are not conducting the research themselves.
4. The selection committee will consider most favorably applications that are creative, original, that leverage AI/machine learning, and that hold the most promise in the areas of screening and early detection, etiology and prevention, therapeutics, cancer biology and genetics. Submissions that focus on health services research, quality of life, and epidemiology are also encouraged. Proposed projects should focus on ovarian cancer and/or related gynecologic cancers.

5. The primary review criteria will be the likelihood that the investigators can leverage this funding to establish a research team capable of performing high-impact research and competing successfully for additional funding, and leverage the resources provided through Microsoft AI for Health.
6. The CRDG-AI grant requires a partnership with Microsoft, investigators who do not wish to partner with Microsoft AI for Health should apply through the other Collaborative Research Development Grant application, which is also available on SmartSimple.
7. There are no citizenship requirements for OCRA Grants, international applicants are welcome to apply.
8. Each applicant may submit only one LOI per grant cycle.
9. Grant recipients can only have 1 OCRA grant active at a time, if the grant recipient already has an active OCRA grant, the current grant must end before the new grant may begin.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, please contact us (see last page).

### Terms of Grant

Support of up to \$300,000USD annually for three years (\$900,000USD total) will be granted to the institution of the Principal Investigator. CRDG-AI grants have an anticipated start date of January 1, 2026. The CRDG-AI grant requires a partnership with Microsoft. *If your grant does not have an AI component or you do not wish to partner with Microsoft AI for Health, you should apply for the CRDG and not the CRDG-AI.* Grant recipients will be required to submit activation deliverables and annual progress reports (narrative and financial) throughout the life of the grant. It is expected that the project will result in peer-reviewed publication(s). Any publications or presentations of work resulting from this grant should acknowledge support from OCRA. *Successful applicants will contract directly with Microsoft for the support of that part of their project.*

### Selection Process

Letters of Intent will be reviewed by Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance's Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC), which is comprised of distinguished members of the medical, research and patient advocacy community from across North America. LOIs will also be reviewed by a small group from Microsoft, which will consider the proposed project's fit with Microsoft's AI for Health capabilities. The majority of LOIs will be triaged at this stage; only a fraction of those submitting LOIs will be invited to submit full proposals. The final grantee will be selected by the OCRA SAC.

We recognize that preparing a full application requires a significant amount of time and energy for investigators, and we believe this process will ensure that only those applications most likely to be competitive will advance to the final round of selection. *Please note that due to the small size of the OCRA staff and Scientific Advisory Committee, we are not able to provide feedback to applicants on their LOIs or Full Proposals.*

### Timeline

**The submission deadline for LOIs is 5:00pm Eastern Time (NY) on March 26, 2025.** Late submissions and extension requests are not permitted. All applicants will be notified of their status in mid-May 2025. Please be sure to add [Grants@ocrahope.org](mailto:Grants@ocrahope.org) to your safe sender list in your email so you can get all

emails from OCRA's grant system. For those selected to submit full proposals, full proposals will be due mid-June 2025.

### **Application Process**

Letters of Intent must be submitted in English via the [SmartSimple](https://ocra.us-1.smartsimple.com/) website (<https://ocra.us-1.smartsimple.com/>) by 5:00pm ET on March 26, 2025, by the Principal Investigator. OCRA grants may only have 1 Principal Investigator listed, however, there is no limit to key personnel.

The SmartSimple website is easy to use and will lead you through the completion of the LOI. We recommend you log into the website soon and familiarize yourself with the website as well as the required parts of the LOI.

Beyond basic contact information about yourself and key personnel, LOIs must include the following:

1. **Scientific Abstract** -- Provide a summary of the proposed research project. The abstract should clearly outline your proposed research project & aims, AI components, an overview of the research team, and resources for the project to allow the reviewers a clear understanding of your proposed project. The abstract should be presented in 6,000 characters or less (including spaces). Text only; figures, images, and graphs are not permitted.
2. **PI Biosketch** -- A current NIH biosketch for the PI is required (must match the person submitting the LOI in SmartSimple). Please use the NIH Biosketch template available for download in SmartSimple and adhere to its instructions and space limitations.
3. **Key Personnel Biosketches** -- NIH biosketches should be provided for anyone you listed in SmartSimple as Key Personnel. All key personnel biosketches should be combined into one document and uploaded as a single PDF. *Please use the biosketch template available for download* in SmartSimple, and adhere to its instructions and space limitations.
4. **Budget** -- Requested total budget amount in USD for the entire grant. A detailed budget is not required during the LOI.

*No figures, references, appendices, detailed budgets, or letters of recommendation or collaboration are required or accepted at this stage.*

Answers to frequently asked questions about the application process are available online [here](https://ocrahope.org/research/for-grantees/grant-application-faq/) (<https://ocrahope.org/research/for-grantees/grant-application-faq/>).

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical problems with SmartSimple please email OCRA – [grants@ocrahope.org](mailto:grants@ocrahope.org). SmartSimple works best when using Google Chrome. Be sure your pop ups are not blocked on your web browser as some items will open a new window.

Questions about the substantive aspects of the application should be directed to Kristin McGowan (contact info below).

### **About OCRA**

Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance (OCRA) is the oldest and largest ovarian and gynecologic cancer charity in the world. Since its founding in 1994, OCRA has grown into the leading non-government

funder of ovarian and related gynecologic cancer research. Through innovative education and advocacy efforts, compassionate support programs, and cross-industry collaboration, OCRA is driving progress and pushing the boundaries of what's possible to improve outcomes for patients and advance research in its quest for a cure. Visit [ocrahope.org](http://ocrahope.org) to learn more.

**For inquiries or further information, please contact:**

Kristin McGowan  
Ovarian Cancer Research Alliance  
Telephone: (212) 268-1002  
E-mail: [grants@ocrahope.org](mailto:grants@ocrahope.org)