

Mission Priority

The United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation (UMDF) and the Mito Foundation are pleased to announce the joint UMDF & Mito Foundation 2025 Research Grant Program. The UMDF and Mito Foundation are committed to funding strategic research and clinical work that advances cures and treatments for primary mitochondrial disease.

A key focus for the 2025 Research Grant Program is the **training and support of the mitochondrial disease research community**, recognizing this is essential for driving impactful research that benefits the global mitochondrial disease community. To this end, both Postdoctoral Fellows and Independent Investigators are eligible for awards under this request for proposals (RFP). The program aims to develop the next generation of researchers dedicated to mitochondrial disease research and encourage innovative approaches from experienced researchers.

A second priority is **clinical trial readiness**, supporting initiatives that facilitate the development of treatments through improved design and execution of clinical studies.

Timing

- **Applications Open:** January 31, 2025, at 09:00 EST
- **Submission Deadline:** February 28, 2025, at 17:00 EST
- **Award Announcement:** June 2025 at the UMDF Mitochondrial Medicine Conference, St. Louis, MO, USA
- **Funding Start Date:** As early as September 2025, pending grant award agreement execution

Scope of Projects

Projects relating to any form of primary mitochondrial disease are welcomed in the following research categories:

1. Basic Science

- High-quality projects that enhance the understanding of mitochondrial mechanisms of pathogenesis while maintaining a focus on therapeutic development and translation. Studies should aim to bridge foundational research with tangible steps toward treatment development, rather than solely contributing to academic knowledge.

2. Translational Research

- Projects that develop new tools to advance basic research from the lab to the clinic, especially novel cellular and animal models, or their application to improve insights, biomarkers, diagnostics, or therapeutics for primary mitochondrial disease

3. Clinical Research

- Patient-centered projects aimed at improving diagnosis, understanding the natural history of specific primary mitochondrial diseases, or developing therapeutic approaches for treating primary mitochondrial disease
- Projects that utilize existing outcome measures to assess disease progression

4. Clinical Trial Readiness

- Projects that enhance clinical trial readiness, including epidemiological studies, development of educational materials for patients and/or health professionals, or the development of new clinically relevant outcome measures or biomarkers that can serve as endpoints for clinical trials

Funding Mechanisms

The Foundations are currently soliciting proposals for the following awards:

- **accelerators Prize** (Postdoctoral Fellowship Prize) - US\$50,000 total (over 2 years)
 - Eligible investigators must be within 3 years of receiving MD, PhD or equivalent degree
 - Award only covers salary and benefits of Postdoctoral Fellow
 - One award, fixed budget
- **Principal Investigator Prize** - US\$100,000 total (over a maximum of 2 years)
 - **Independent Investigators at any stage of career** are eligible (Postdoctoral Fellows and Research Scientists are not considered Independent Investigators)
 - Salaries, benefits and supplies allowable as expenses
 - One or more awards, fixed budget
- **Clinical Trial Readiness Grants** – up to US\$50,000 total (over a maximum of 1 year)
 - **Investigators at any stage of career** are eligible
 - Salaries, benefits and supplies allowable as expenses.
 - One or more awards, smaller budgets are encouraged (not to exceed US\$50,000)

This strategic partnership aims to fund the most impactful and highest-quality primary mitochondrial disease research and clinical work, irrespective of location. Applicants may be based anywhere in the world. The foundations anticipate awarding up to a total of US\$500,000 during this grant cycle.

Note: The Research Grant Program does not pay institutional overhead and administration costs, research infrastructure and other indirect costs. Co-funding contributions are highly encouraged.

Contact grants@umdf.org for questions related to eligibility.

Application Process

The application process will proceed as follows:

- All applications will be processed on the [UMDF Online Grant Portal](#) utilizing a standard application form.
- Proposals may be started on January 31, 2025 and applications must be submitted by February 28, 2025. Applicants are reminded to leave sufficient time for any necessary institutional approvals so as to meet the above timeline. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**

Review Process

The UMDF and Mito Foundation ensure rigorous peer review, with all submissions treated confidentially and conflicts of interest managed carefully.

- Proposals must include a 250 word (maximum) scientific abstract that provides sufficient information to allow for further review consideration by the Foundations
- Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of experts including UMDF and Mito Foundation staff members, scientific and medical advisors, and external experts
- Scoring and review key criteria include but are not limited to: responsiveness to this RFP, relevance to UMDF and Mito Foundation mission and goals, scientific novelty, scientific quality and rigor, and potential impact to the mitochondrial disease community
- All applicants will receive notification of their submission status and receive a summary of review results

accelerators Program

The *accelerators* program was launched at UMDF in 2019 to better align foundation donor dollars and research grant programing. All Postdoctoral Fellow submissions are subject to the same peer review process described above with the top 3-5 proposals deemed fundable advancing (“The Finalists”). The Finalists are then invited to present a 5-minute pitch to a group of UMDF and Mito Foundation donors known as “*accelerators*” based on their level of philanthropic giving to the respective foundations. The *accelerators* then vote for their favorite proposal. The proposal earning the most votes receives the *accelerators* Prize. The Finalists are also encouraged to present their proposal as a poster during the UMDF conference. The annual Mitochondrial Medicine Conference brings together the top mitochondrial medicine researchers and the mitochondrial disease community. This year’s conference will be held in St. Louis, MO, USA, June 18 – June 21, 2025. We encourage postdoctoral researchers to attend in person to present their work but will consider virtual presentations as well. This is a great opportunity for the Finalists to network with fellow researchers and for the *accelerators* to ask questions. Further details can be found on the UMDF website regarding [UMDF Research Grants](#) as well as the [accelerators program](#).

Questions? **Ask!** Please email grants@umdf.org