

AUGUST 2026

Brain Health

Request for Proposals (RFP)



Overview

Brain health is critical to an individual's health and well-being across their lifespan. Disorders of the brain and nervous system impose profound burdens on individuals, families, and communities. Despite scientific progress, significant gaps remain in therapeutic innovations for optimizing brain health.

The AMC Innovative Health Foundation seeks to support breakthrough scientific research across the full spectrum of brain health conditions. The Foundation is particularly interested in rigorous, high-impact projects that may be considered too novel or high-risk for traditional funding sources, but if successful, would accelerate meaningful progress for patients in the near future.

Cohen Philanthropies encompasses the philanthropic endeavors of Steve and Alex Cohen through the Steven & Alexandra Cohen Foundation, the Amazin' Mets Foundation, and the AMC Innovative Health Foundation. The AMC Innovative Health Foundation was established by Alex Cohen to address critical gaps she recognized in research, education, and resources for complex, stigmatized, and historically underserved areas of health.

Request For Proposals (RFP) Details

The Foundation is accepting proposals across the spectrum of brain health conditions, which includes but is not limited to these categories:

- **Neurodegenerative diseases**, ex. Alzheimer's Disease, Parkinson's Disease, Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis
- **Infection-associated neurological conditions**, ex. Post-treatment Lyme Disease Syndrome, Post-COVID Conditions, Multiple Sclerosis
- **Developmental disorders**, ex. Autism, Intellectual disability
- **Brain injuries**, ex. Traumatic Brain Injury, Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy
- **Other**, ex. Brain tumors, Stroke, Migraine / Headache disorders, Epilepsy

Priority consideration will be given to proposals that bridge the Foundation's existing research portfolios, including Lyme Disease / Infection-Associated Chronic Illness and Women's Health. The Foundation is also especially interested in research that can translate into patient impact as soon as possible.



Finally, the Foundation is accepting submissions in three funding tiers:

- **Tier 1:** \$400,000 maximum distributed over up to 2 years.
 - Preliminary data is not required.
- **Tier 2:** \$2,000,000 maximum distributed over up to 3 years.
 - Preliminary data is required.
- **Tier 3:** \$5,000,000 maximum distributed over up to 3 years.
 - Preliminary data is required.

The RFP process starts with applicants submitting a Letter of Intent, which is the primary proposal documentation for the review process – see details below.

Letter of Intent

Organizations interested in applying for the RFP should submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) no later than **Thursday, Sept. 24, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET**.

The submission will include contact / background details along with two (2) documents: an LOI and an itemized budget, as outlined below.

1. **Letter of Intent (LOI):** The LOI must include four (4) sections consistent with the criteria below:
 - a. **Project Description:** A two-page maximum document (11pt Arial, 0.5-inch margins, single-spaced) answering the following questions:
 - i. Describe the scientific rationale, project aims, and research plan (e.g., study design, brief methodology) for the proposed research project.
 - ii. Describe the outputs / deliverables and milestones over the project timeline.
 - iii. If successful, how does this project address a gap in brain health research and/or patient care?
 - iv. If successful, what is the anticipated timeline to patient impact?
 - v. What makes this project innovative, unique, or otherwise different from similar projects?
 - vi. Figures (e.g., graphics, charts, tables) may be included in the two-page submission.
 - b. **Citations / Bibliography:** All publication citations / references do NOT count toward the 2-page limit for the Project Description.



- c. **Biosketches or CVs** for each individual who will lead the research project. All biosketches do NOT count toward the 2-page limit for the Project Description.
 - d. **Professional References:** Contact details for up to three (3) professional references who can attest to your professional skills and collaborative attitude. Provide only the name and contact details for the professional references. These do NOT count toward the 2-page limit for the Project Description.
2. **Itemized budget.** The Excel budget template can be downloaded [here](#). Submitted budgets must be in Excel format otherwise the application will not be considered. Please note that the maximum allowable indirect cost rate is 12.5%. There are no exceptions.

To Submit: Please see the [RFP website](#) for the LOI submission form and related instructions. There is no provided template for the LOI document. To apply, use the LOI submission form to:

- Provide contact and background details about the PI, organization, and project
- Upload the LOI document
- Upload the Itemized Budget document

After Submission: A confirmation email will be sent to the Primary and Secondary Contacts listed on the form. If you do not receive a confirmation email, your submission has not been successfully received, and you should follow up with GrantInquiries@cohengives.org.

Note: An LOI submission does NOT guarantee an invitation to the next stage of the application review process.

Stages and Anticipated Timeline

The proposal review process will include three (3) stages:

1. **Letter of Intent (LOI):** Applicants will submit an LOI (and itemized budget) outlining the proposed project. The LOI is the primary proposal documentation for the review process. After LOI submission, additional details or clarifications regarding the proposed activities may be requested.
2. **Finalist Selection and Discussion:** After LOIs are submitted, a subset of LOI applicants will be selected as finalists, who will be invited to participate in informational meetings and/or submit supplemental details about their project.
3. **Foundation Decisions:** After reviewing finalists' proposals, the Foundation will inform finalists regarding funding decisions.



The planned timeline for the RFP is outlined below:

Stage	Date *
Letter of Intent (LOI) deadline	Sept. 24, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET
Finalist Selection and Discussion	Late 2026 or early 2027
Foundation Decisions	Tiers 1 and 2: first half of 2027 Tier 3: second half of 2027

** Please note, these dates are subject to change and may differ by budgetary tier.*

Eligibility and Submissions

Applicants are eligible to apply if the following requirements are met:

- **A 501(c)(3) charitable organization or 170(c)(1) State-controlled Institution of Higher Education:** The organization must be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as having tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) or Section 170(c)(1); and
- **Project activities must be exclusively based in the United States;** and
- **The principal investigator is required to:**
 1. Have an MD or PhD degree (or equivalent); and
 2. Hold a faculty appointment at a US-based academic research institution (or equivalent).
- **One (1) submission per principal investigator will be accepted.** An institution may submit multiple proposals under separate principal investigators.

Please note that all invitations to apply are subject to Foundation discretion.

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Consistency with RFP requirements
- Innovation and impact on patients
- Programmatic and scientific assessment
- Operational feasibility assessment
- Budget and value for investment
- Historical performance in related projects
- Alignment with Foundation's strategic vision

The AMC Innovative Health Foundation reserves the right to modify the criteria and determine eligibility at its sole discretion. Applications that are not approved may not receive feedback.



Budget

- The budget template is available [here](#).
- Grants will support discrete, time-bound projects.
- Applicants may apply for one of the three funding tiers:
 - Tier 1: \$400,000 maximum distributed over up to 2 years.
 - Tier 2: \$2,000,000 maximum distributed over up to 3 years.
 - Tier 3: \$5,000,000 maximum distributed over up to 3 years.
- The maximum allowable indirect cost rate is 12.5%. There are no exceptions.
- Multi-site projects are acceptable, but the budget limit still applies per project (not per institution).

Additional Information

For questions regarding the Request for Proposals, please email:

GrantInquiries@cohengives.org. Please include the RFP title in the subject line of the email.

All RFP information and the LOI submission form can be found at:

www.steveandalex.org/get-connected

