

Osher Pilot Research Grants Request for Application Guidelines (2025/6)

The Osher Center for Integrative Health at Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hospital invites applicants to apply for seed grant funding through the annual Osher Pilot Research Grant funding mechanism. The purpose of this program is to provide early funding for innovative projects in the field of integrative medicine including basic, translational, and clinical research.

The program supports collaborative projects consistent with the **following domains of research** within the Osher Center's evolving 2021-2026 Strategic Plan:

- Science of Mind-Body Connections,
- Clinical Effectiveness of Multi-modal and Integrative Interventions,
- Systems and Translational Biology in Integrative Medicine,
- Lifestyle, Nutrition and Dietary Supplements
- Technology and Integrative Health
- Science of Human and Nature Connections

Funds are awarded on a competitive basis, as pilot grants of \$25,000 to \$50,000 for 12 months, with up to four grants available for 2026. Applications undergo a formal peer-review process and are ranked for funding priority based on strategic and scientific merit.

Timeline

09/01/2025: RFA Announcement

01/30/2026: Letter of Intent Due

03/16/2026: Full Applications Invited

05/04/2026: Full Applications Due

07/01/2026: Awardees Announced

09/01/2026: Funding and Projects Commence

Eligibility

All members of the Harvard Medical School (HMS) research community with a faculty appointment of Instructor and above are invited to apply. Individuals may serve as the PI of only one proposal per application cycle.

Review criteria

The Osher Center's mission is to advance 'whole person health,' encompassing mind, body, spirit, and community, through pioneering research, education, and clinical care. Our vision is a unified and integrated healthcare system that treats, heals, and empowers all people to lead their best lives on a healthy planet. To help achieve our mission and vision, we pursue innovative research approaches to whole person health.

Pilot Projects will be evaluated primarily for their potential to advance the strategic mission and vision of the Osher Center through collaborative, cross-disciplinary innovative research related to integrative medicine and health.

- Projects must be scientifically meritorious and aligned with one or more of Osher Center research domains listed above.
- Projects should not be merely an extension of ongoing work but rather novel ideas/programs

which require seed funding.

- Projects creating new collaborations between PIs, research groups, or institutions within the HMS community will be given priority.
- Priority will also be given to projects that are translational and/or integrate across physiological systems.

Review Process

- From the Letters of Intent (LOI), approximately 10 applicants will be invited to submit full applications. LOIs will be reviewed by an ad-hoc Osher Center Pilot Grant Review Committee (chaired by the Osher Center Research Directors).
- Full applications undergo a formal peer-reviewed process and will be ranked according to NIH criteria. Ranked proposals will be reviewed by the Osher Center Directors, and final decisions will be announced on 07/01/2026.
- Written critiques will not be provided.

Reciprocity

- Recipients will be obligated to provide a progress report to the Osher Center at six months, and at the end of the funding period (one year), or as an oral presentation at the Osher Integrative Medicine Network Forum, or upon completion of the study.
- Grantees will notify the Osher Center when other grants are received as a result of Osher pilot funding.
- Grantees will acknowledge the Osher Center in publications resulting from seed grant support and will notify the Osher Center when such papers have been submitted.

Indirect Cost Policy

The intention of the Osher Center Pilot Research Grants is to foster multidisciplinary collaborative projects across institutions. While these limited funds are intended to cover research, rather than administrative costs, we understand that some institutions require a certain proportion of grants to cover indirect and/or modified direct costs.

Up to 20% of the total award is allowed to be used as indirect and/or modified direct costs, including any indirect costs associated with sub-awards. We encourage applicants to work with their respective parent and subcontracting institutions, if applicable, to reduce administrative costs if possible so that the maximum amount of the awards can be used for the research projects.

No Cost Extension Policy

Awardees are expected to complete their projects within one year from the date of award. However, we understand that extenuating circumstances may prevent timely completion. Based on the written request of the PI at least 1 month before the project end date, showing demonstrated need, the Osher Research faculty are willing to assess active projects on a case-by-case basis for up to a maximum of two no-cost extensions to complete their Osher pilot study.

Submitting Letters of Interest

- Download the Letter of Intent template from our website (oshercenter.org).
- Send the completed LOI to hmsoshercenter@bwh.harvard.edu by 1/30/2026.

Questions

For questions about eligibility and the application process, please contact the Osher Center at hmsoshercenter@bwh.harvard.edu

